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AN ELEMENTARY  
MIDDLE ENGLISH GRAMMAR





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MIDDLE ENGLISH  
GRAMMAR

BY

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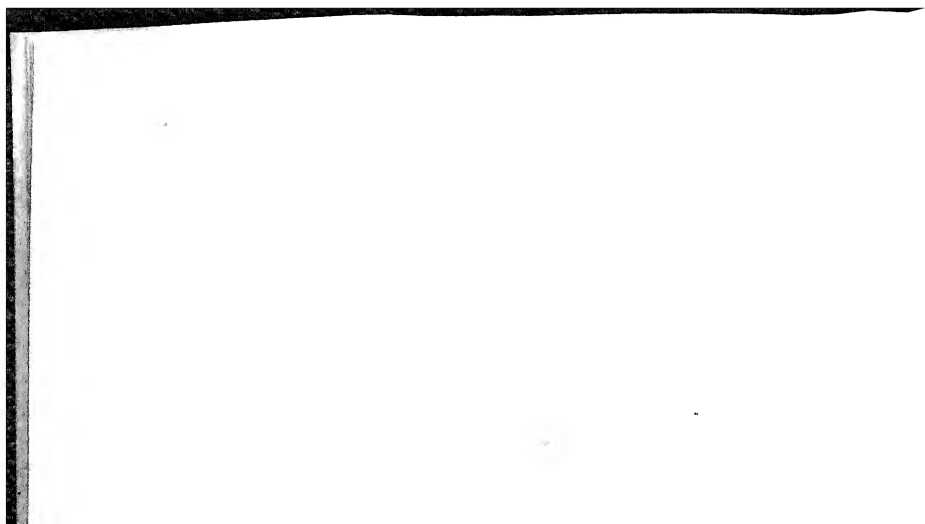
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TO THE REVERED MEMORY  
OF  
DR. HENRY BRADLEY  
AND  
DR. SIR JAMES MURRAY

WHO DEVOTED THEIR LONG AND STRENUOUS LIVES  
TO PROMOTING THE STUDY OF ENGLISH WORD-  
LORE THIS MIDDLE ENGLISH GRAMMAR  
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

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## PREFACE

THE need of an elementary Middle English Grammar written on scientific and historical principles must long have been felt by pupils and teachers alike, and it is with a view of supplying this need that the present Grammar has been written. In writing it we have followed as far as possible the plan adopted in the *Elementary Old English Grammar*, our object being to furnish students with a concise account of the phonology and inflexions of the Middle English period. And in order that the book may form a kind of basis for the modern English period, we have in almost all cases chosen the examples illustrating the Middle English sound-changes from words which have survived in Modern English. It will thus link up with a similar book dealing with the phonology and inflexions of New English, which is already in an advanced stage of preparation, and which will be published next year.

In dealing with the Middle English dialects, we have, as far as is possible in an elementary Grammar, endeavoured to exhibit the phonological and inflexional features of each group of dialects without attaching too great importance to any one of them. In this part of the work we have made considerable use of the modern dialects, as they help to throw much light upon many points of Middle English phonology.

As the book is not intended for specialists in English philology, some more or less important details have

been intentionally omitted. All or most of them will doubtless be found in Morsbach's *Mittelenglische Grammatik*, Halle, 1896, and Luick's *Historische Grammatik der englischen Sprache*, Leipzig, 1914-21, if these two comprehensive grammars are ever completed, as well as some of them in *Chaucers Sprache und Verskunst* by B. ten Brink, third edition, edited by E. Eckhardt, Leipzig, 1920. We gratefully acknowledge our indebtedness to the above-mentioned works, and to Björkman's *Scandinavian Loan-words in Middle English*, Halle, 1900-2.

We are convinced that the student who conscientiously works through this book will find that he has gained a thorough general knowledge of Middle English sound-laws and inflexions, and has thereby, not only laid a solid foundation for further study of historical English grammar, but also for a fuller and more appreciative study of mediaeval English Literature.

In conclusion, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the Controller of the University Press for his great kindness in complying with our wishes in regard to special type, and to the Press reader for his valuable help with the reading of the proofs.

JOSEPH WRIGHT.

ELIZABETH MARY WRIGHT.

OXFORD,  
October, 1923.

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## ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

AN.	= Anglo-Norman	Mod.	= Modern
Angl.	= Anglian	N. or n.	= Northern
C.Fr.	= Central French	NE.	= New English
dial.	= dialect	N. E. D.	= New English Dic- tionary
ED.Gr.	= English Dialect Grammar	NHG.	= New High German
EM.	= East Midland	Nth.	= Northumbrian
EOE.Gr.	= Elementary Old Eng- lish Grammar	NW.	= north-west(ern)
Fr.	= French	OE.	= Old English
Goth.	= Gothic	O.Fr.	= Old French
Ken.	= Kentish	O.Icel.	= Old Icelandic
Lat.	= Latin	ON.	= Old Norse
M. or m.	= Midland	S. or s.	= Southern
ME.	= Middle English	Sc.	= Scottish
MHG.	= Middle High Ger- man	W. or w.	= West
		WM.	= West Midland
		WS.	= West Saxon
b	= v in <i>vine</i> , <i>five</i>	ž	= s in <i>measure</i>
ð	= th in <i>then</i>	dž	= j in <i>just</i>
3	= g often heard in German <i>sagen</i>	š	= sh in <i>ship</i>
ɔ	= n in <i>finger</i> , <i>think</i>	tš	= ch in <i>chin</i>
		x	= ch in German <i>nacht</i> , <i>nicht</i>

The sign  $\bar{}$  placed over vowels is used to mark long vowels. The sign  $\underset{\cdot}{}$  placed under vowels is used to denote open vowels, as  $\bar{e}$ ,  $\bar{o}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{e}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{i}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{o}$ . The sign  $\underset{\cdot}{}$  placed under vowels is used to denote close vowels, as  $\bar{e}$ ,  $\bar{o}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{e}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{i}$ ,  $\underset{\cdot}{o}$ . Simple  $\underset{\cdot}{e}$  in unaccented syllables denotes that the vowel was not pronounced, as *come $\underset{\cdot}{e}$* , *heve $\underset{\cdot}{n}$ e*, *live $\underset{\cdot}{d}$ e*. The asterisk \* prefixed to a word denotes a theoretical form, as *cladd* from older \**clādd*, *clothed*.

## INTRODUCTION

§ 1. Middle English embraces that period of the English language which extends from about 1100 to 1500. The division of a language into fixed periods must of necessity be more or less arbitrary. What are given as the characteristics of one period have generally had their beginnings in the previous period, and it is impossible to say with perfect accuracy when one period begins and another ends. In fact many of the vowel-changes which are generally described as having taken place in early ME. did in reality take place in late OE., although early ME. writers often continued to use the traditional OE. spelling long after the sound-changes had taken place; this applies especially to æ, ŷ, ěa, ěo. And just as it is impossible to fix the precise date at which one period of a language ends and another begins, so also it is not possible to do more than to fix approximately the date at which any particular sound-change took place, because in most languages, and more especially in English, the change in orthography has not kept pace with the change in sound.

§ 2. For practical purposes Middle English may be conveniently divided into three sub-periods:—(a) Early ME. extending from about 1100 to 1250. (b) Ordinary ME. extending from about 1250 to 1400. And (c) late ME. extending from about 1400 to 1500.

(a) Early ME. 1100–1250. The chief characteristics of this sub-period are:—The preservation in a great measure of the traditional OE. system of orthography, and the

beginnings of the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography. The change of *æ* to *a* (§ 43), *ā* to *ō* in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), the lengthening of *a*, *e*, *o* in open syllables of dissyllabic words (§ 77), the formation of a large number of new diphthongs of the *-i* and *-u* type (§§ 104, 105), the preservation for the most part of unaccented final *-e* (§ 139). The breaking up of the OE. inflexional system, especially that of the declensions of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns. The preservation of greater remnants of the OE. declensions of nouns, adjectives, and pronouns in the South than in the North and the Midlands. Grammatical gender was almost entirely lost in nouns (§ 314). Few Anglo-Norman loan-words found their way into the dialects of the South, still fewer into those of the Midlands, and hardly any at all into those of the north Midlands, and of the North.

(b) Ordinary ME. 1250-1400. The chief characteristics of this sub-period are:—The gradual formation of extensive literary dialect centres; and in the fourteenth century, especially in the second half, the beginnings of a standard ME. which, excluding Scotland, became fully developed in the fifteenth century. The great influence of Anglo-Norman orthography upon the written language (§§ 7-21). Unaccented final *-e* had practically ceased to be pronounced in all the dialects. The limitation of the inflexion of nouns and adjectives chiefly to one main type in the North and the Midlands, and in the South to two main types—the strong with the inflexions of the old *a*-declension, and the weak. The introduction of a large number of Anglo-Norman words into all the dialects, even into those of the North.

(c) Late ME. 1400-1500. In this sub-period we can observe the gradual disappearance of the local dialect element from the literature of the period through the spread and influence of the London literary language. The close approximation of the system of inflexions to that

of New English. The gradual cleavage between the Scottish and the northern dialects of England.

§ 3. In the present state of our knowledge it is not possible to give more than a rough-and-ready classification of the ME. dialects, because we are unable to fix the exact boundaries where one dialect ends and another begins. Nor shall we ever be able to remedy this defect until we possess a comprehensive atlas of the modern dialects such as has been produced by France and Germany of their dialects. An atlas of this kind would enable English scholars to fix the dialect boundaries far more accurately than is possible at present, and to show conclusively that there was no such thing as a uniform northern, north Midland, east Midland, west Midland, or south Midland dialect in the ME. period, but that within each principal division there were many sub-dialects each possessing clearly defined phonological peculiarities.

§ 4. ME. is usually divided into three large groups of dialects:—

1. The Northern Group, including the dialects of the Lowlands of Scotland, Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, Westmorland, the whole of Yorkshire except the south, and north Lancashire. Roughly speaking, the Humber and the Ouse formed the southern boundary, while the Pennine Chain determined its limits to the West.

2. The Midland Group, including the dialects of south Yorkshire, the whole of Lancashire except the north, the counties to the west of the Pennine Chain, the East Anglian counties, and the whole of the Midland area. It corresponded roughly to the Old Mercian and East Anglian areas. The Thames formed the southern boundary of this extensive group of dialects. This group is generally further subdivided into the north Midland, east Midland, west Midland, and south Midland dialects.

3. The Southern Group, including the dialects of the

counties south of the Thames, Gloucestershire, and parts of Herefordshire and Worcestershire. This group is often further sub-divided into the south Eastern dialects, also sometimes called Kentish or the Kentish group of dialects, and the south Western dialects.

§ 5. So far as is possible in an elementary grammar we have endeavoured to exhibit the phonological and morphological features of each of the various groups of dialects without attaching too great importance to any one of them. And with this end in view considerable use has been made of the modern dialects, as they undoubtedly help to throw light upon many debatable points of ME. phonology which can never be satisfactorily settled in any other manner.

# PHONOLOGY

## CHAPTER I

### ORTHOGRAPHY AND PRONUNCIATION

#### 1. ORTHOGRAPHY

§ 6. The following brief sketch of ME. orthography is merely intended to draw the student's attention to the subject in a connected manner. To enter into it here with any degree of completeness would necessitate the repetition of much that properly belongs to other chapters. Long vowels were, of course, not marked as such in ME. manuscripts, but in order to avoid confusion they are here generally marked long.

§ 7. The ordinary ME. orthography is based partly on the traditional OE. orthography and partly on the Anglo-Norman (AN.). OE. ǣ, ĕa, and ĕo continued to be written in early ME. long after they had changed in sound. ǣ had become a over a large area of the country in the early part of the twelfth century, but it often continued to be written ǣ and by AN. scribes e until well on into the second half of the thirteenth century. ea became æ in late OE., but the ea often continued to be written until a much later date. And then the æ had the same further fate as the ordinary OE. æ above. The old traditional spelling with ǣ was preserved in the *Ormulum* (c. 1200), *Lazamon* (c. 1205), and the Proclamation of London (1258), but in other monuments it, as also ǣ from older ĕa, was generally written ē from about



the end of the twelfth century. *ēa* had also become *æ*, except in Kentish, by about the beginning of the eleventh century, although the *ēa* often continued to be written until a much later period. This change of *æ* to *ē* was merely a letter change due to the influence of AN. orthography; the *æ*-sound itself probably remained throughout the ME. period. Through *æ* and *ēa* falling together in sound in late OE. the *ēa* was sometimes written for old *æ* in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and also occasionally much later. At a still later period this writing of *ēa* for *æ* became the general way of expressing long open *ē* of whatever origin, cp. NE. *leap*, *deal*, *eat*, ME. *lēpen*, *dēlen*, *ēten*, OE. *hlēapan*, *dāelan*, *etan*. The old traditional spelling with *eo*, *ēo* was often preserved in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, although the *eo*, *ēo* had become *e*, *ē* in sound in the northern and east Midland dialects, and *ö*, *ō* in the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish) in the twelfth century. And then through the influence of AN. orthography the *ö*, *ō* sounds came to be written *o*, *ue*, and sometimes *u*. The writing of *e* for *æ* (= OE. *æ*, *ēa*) and of *e* for *ē* (= OE. *ē*, *ēo*) led to confusion in ME. orthography owing to long open *ē* and long close *ē* being written alike, cp. *leden*, *ded* = OE. *lædan* *to lead*, *dēad* *dead*, beside *fet*, *crepen* = OE. *fēt* *feet*, *crēopan* *to creep*.

§ 8. Long and short *ȳ* (= *ū*) became unrounded to *ī* over a large part of the country during the OE. period. The result was that monuments written in these extensive areas during the ME. period have both *i* and *y* to represent old long and short *ī*. In the late ME. period an attempt was made by some writers to restrict the use of *y* to express old long *ī*.

§ 9. Many of the changes which the OE. vowel-system underwent in ME. were not due to sound-changes, but were merely orthographical changes introduced by Anglo-Norman

scribes. Examples of such changes are:—In those areas where the OE. short *y* (= *ü*) remained in the ME. period it came to be written *u* (like the *u* in Fr. *lune*), and the long *ȳ* (= *ū*) came to be written *u*, *ui* (*uy*) from about 1170 onwards (§§ 49, 57). After the writing of *u* for *y*, and the *u*, *ui* (*uy*) for *ȳ* had become general in those districts where the long and short *ū*-sound had remained, the *y* began to be written for *ī*, especially before and after nasals, *u* (= *v*), *w*, and finally. This writing of *y* for *ī* gradually became very common, and by the time of Chaucer it was also used in other positions as well. From about the middle of the thirteenth century *o* came to be written for *u* before and after nasals, *u* (= *v*), and *w*. This writing of *o* for *u* in these positions became pretty general towards the end of the thirteenth century. The object of using *y*, *o* for *i*, *u* in the above positions was primarily to avoid graphical confusion. In late ME. *o* was also generally written for *u* when followed by a single consonant + vowel. *v* was often written for *u* initially, and *u* for *v* medially between vowels. The writing of *ou* (*ow*) for *ū* became fairly common in the second half of the thirteenth century, and in the fourteenth century it became general. By the time of Chaucer it was generally written *ow* when final and frequently also in open syllables, especially before *l*, *n*, and *v*, but in other positions it was mostly written *ou*. *e* came to be written for *æ* (later *a*), *æ̃* (see above) in early ME., and in later ME. *ie* was sometimes written for *ē* (cp. § 197, 2).

§ 10. In later ME. *ea* was occasionally used for *ē*, *oa* (*ao*) for *ō*; the diphthongs *ai*, *ei*, *oi*, *au*, *eu*, *ou* were often written *ay*, *ey*, *oy*, *aw*, *ew*, *ow* finally and before *n*; and *ai* (*ay*), *ei* (*ey*), *oi* (*oy*) were written for *ā*, *ē*, *ō* in the northern dialects, see § 121.

§ 11. During the ME. period some attempt was made to distinguish between long and short vowels in writing, but

only Orm made a systematic attempt to indicate long vowels by writing double consonants after short vowels. His system, however, broke down when a short vowel was in an open syllable. In this position he sometimes put a mark over the vowel, thus *dāle* *ralley*, to indicate that the vowel was short. Orm's system was cumbersome, but it was not more so than some of the other attempts which were made to indicate long vowels. From the fourteenth century onwards long *ē* and *ō* were often indicated by writing them double in closed syllables and when final, but single in open syllables, as *dēð* *deud*, *dēð* *deed*; but *dēlen* *to deal*, *mēten* *to meet*; *boȝt* *boat*, *foȝt* *foot*; but *grōpen* *to grope*, *brōper* *brother*. *ā* was rarely written *aa* in closed syllables. The reason why *ā*, *ē*, *ō* were not written double in open syllables was doubtless due to the lengthening of early ME. *a*, *e*, *o* in open syllables in the first half of the thirteenth century (§ 78). These new long vowels were always followed by an *e* in the next syllable, and this *e* came to be regarded as the sign of a long vowel in the preceding syllable. And then later the *e* came to be used in words to which it did not etymologically belong for the purpose of indicating a preceding long vowel. Long and short *ū* came to be distinguished by writing the former *ou* (*ow*) and the latter *u* (*o*). By some later ME. writers an attempt was made to distinguish between long and short *ī* by writing the former *y* and the latter *i*. This mode of indicating *ī* was very common in Chaucer.

§ 12. In late ME. it became fairly common to double consonants after short stem-vowels in order to indicate that the preceding vowel was short, just as is the case in Modern German.

§ 13. The OE. consonant-system was very defective inasmuch as each of the letters *c*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *n*, *s* and *p* was used to represent two or more sounds, see *EOE. Gr.* § 7. The ambiguity in the use of these consonants was chiefly due to

sound-changes which took place during the OE. period without the corresponding changes in the orthography. Germanic **f**, **þ** and **s** became voiced in OE. between voiced sounds, and Germanic **þ**, **z** became unvoiced when they came to stand finally, but no regular change took place in the orthography to indicate the change in pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 139, 172. Again Germanic **k**, **g** (which only occurred in the combination **ng**), **χ**, **z** and **ng** became differentiated in OE. into gutturals and palatals, but the same letters were kept to indicate both kinds of sounds, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 166, 168-70. Mainly through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography many of the above ambiguities were got rid of in ME.

§ 14. **c** came to be used for the **k**-sound before guttural vowels and liquids, and **k** before palatal vowels and **n**. The letter **c** was sometimes used for voiceless **s** initially before palatal vowels, and in AN. words both initially and medially, as *citee*, *receiven*. **c** was also sometimes used to express **ts**, as *blecen*, OE. *bletsian* to *bless*, *milce*, OE. *milts* *mercy*. The OE. combination **cw** was written **qu**. From about 1150 onwards it became common to write **ch** for the assibilated OE. palatal **c** (= **tš**), and **cch** (**chch**) when it was doubled.

§ 15. **v** was written initially in those ME. dialects where **f** had become voiced in this position. **u** later **v** came to be written medially for OE. voiced **f**, and **v** was often written for **u** initially.

§ 16. In OE. the explosive **g** and the spirant **ȝ** were written alike, but in ME. **g** came to be used exclusively for the explosive, and **ȝ** for the spirant, as *gōd*, *glad*, beside *ȝard*, *ȝernen*, early ME. *bȝe* = OE. *boga* *bow*. For initial **ȝ** the letters **y**- and **i**- were also used, as *yaf*, *iaf* = *ȝaf*, OE. *geaf* *he gave*. At the end of words **ȝ** was sometimes used for **z** (= **ts**), and in late ME. for voiced **s**, through confusion with **z**, and conversely **z** for **ȝ**. Some scribes also used **g**

for *ȝ* initially. The assibilated OE. palatal *cg* (= *dž*) came to be written *gg*, but this was not an improvement, because OE. did distinguish in writing between the guttural and palatal explosive *gg* by writing the former *gg* and the latter *cg*, as in *dogga dog*, beside *licgan to lie down*. In Fr. words *dž* was written *j* (also sometimes *i*) initially and *g* (*gg*) medially, as *juge*, *chargen*, *plegge*.

§ 17. In order to distinguish between the pronunciation of the aspirate *h* and the spirant *h* = *χ*, the *h* gradually became used for the aspirate only, and the spirant was represented by *ȝ* (also sometimes by *c*, *g*), later *gh* (also *ch*, especially in the Scottish dialects). This rule had become fully established by the time of Chaucer who usually has *gh*. *st* was sometimes written for *ȝt* (*ht*). OE. *hw* came to be written *qu*, *qv*, *quh* in the northern dialects, especially the Scottish, and generally *wh* in the other dialects.

§ 18. *s* was generally written for both the voiced and the voiceless *s*, but *z* was occasionally used for the former, especially in late ME. *sc* was sometimes written for *ss*, as bliscd *blessed*, and *z* for *ts*, as *milze*, OE. *milts mercy*.

§ 19. The *š*-sound from OE. *sc* was generally written *sch* in early ME., and later also *ssh*, *sh*, and in Ken. *ss*, as *ssrive*, *vless*. Double *šš* was written *schs*, *ssh*, and also *shs* (§ 289).

§ 20. OE. *þ*, *ð* continued to be written side by side until well on into the thirteenth century, and then the latter went out of use. In the fourteenth century *th* gradually came to be used beside *þ*, but the *þ* continued to be written beside *th*, especially initially, throughout the ME. period. In the best manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales* *th* is generally used.

§ 21. The OE. rune *ƿ* (= *w*) continued to be used occasionally until the end of the thirteenth century, but the ordinary way of writing u-consonant was *uu* (also *vv* in early ME.) and *w*.

## 2. PRONUNCIATION

## A. THE VOWELS.

§ 22. ME. had the following simple vowels and diphthongs:—

Short Vowels a, e, i, o, u, ö, ü

Long „ ā, ē, ē, ī, ō, ō, ū, ō, ū

Diphthongs ai, ei, ei, oi, ui, au, eu, eu, iu, ou, ou

NOTE.—With the exception of ē and ō the short and long vowels had the same sound-values as in OE. where ð, ð̄ = ME. ö, ū. ē is used in ME. to represent two slightly different sounds, viz. a low-front-narrow vowel like OE. æ, and a mid-front-wide vowel which arose in ME. by the lengthening of OE. e in open syllables, see §§ 52, 78. The sound represented by ō did not exist in OE.

§ 23. The approximate pronunciation of the above vowels and diphthongs was as follows:—

a like the a in OE. *assa* and NHG. *gast*, as *asse*, *bladder*, *chapman*, *passen*.

e like the e in NE. *met*, as *bed*, *fellen*, *gest*, *helfen*, *slepte*.

i like the i in NE. *bit*, as *bidden*, *children*, *nȳt night*, *sitten*.

o like the o in NE. *dog*, as *dogge*, *gosling*, *hors*, *norþ*.

u like the u in NE. *full*, as *dust*, *ful*, *sunne (sonne) sun*, *wulf (wolf)*, see § 48.

ö (gen. written o, ue, and sometimes u) like the ö in NHG. *götter*, as *chorl (churl)*, *horte (huerte, hurte) heart*, *storre star*, *orpe (urpe) earth*, see § 60.

ü (gen. written u) like the ü in NHG. *füllen*, as *brugge bridge*, *duppen to dip*, *kussen to kiss*, *sunne sin*, see § 49.

ā like the a in NE. *father*, as *āle*, *bāken*, *nāme*, *rāven*.

ē like the ai in NE. *air*, as *lēden (OE. lǣdan) to lead*,

lēpen (OE. hlēapan) *to leap*; ēten (OE. etan) *to eat*, mēte (OE. mete) *meat*, see §§ 52, 78.

ē like the e in NHG. reh, as dēd *deed*, dēp, hēre, fēt, snēsen.

ī like the i in NE. machine, as bīten, fīnden, līf, tīde.

ō like the a in NE. all, as bōte (OE. bāt) *boat*, cōld (OE. ceald) *cold*; cōle (OE. col) *coal*, prōte (OE. prote) *throat*, see § 51, note.

ō like the o in NHG. bote and the eau in Fr. beau, as brōper, fōt, lōken, sōne.

ū (gen. written ou, ow), like the ou in Fr. sou, and nearly like the oo in NE. food, as doun, hous, hou (how), pound.

ō (gen. written o, ue, eo, and sometimes u) like the ö in NHG. schön, as choose(n) chuse(n) *to choose*, duep (dup) *deep*, lof, (luef, luf) *dear*, see § 65.

û (gen. written u, ui, uy) like the ü in NHG. grün, as fur (fuir) *fire*, huden (huiden) *to hide*, mus (muis) *mice*, see § 57.

ai nearly like the ai in NE. aisle, as dai (day), hail, maiden, saide *he said*.

Early ME. ei nearly like the ay in NE. day, as clei, grei, leide *he laid*, pleien *to play*, wei, see § 107.

Early ME. ei with e like the é in Fr. été, as deien *to die*, eie *eye*, fleien *to fly*, see § 107, 6.

oi like the oy in NE. boy, as boi (boy), chois, joie, vois.

au nearly like the ou in NE. out, as drawen, fauht *he fought*, sauþ *he saw*, tauhte *he taught*.

eu like the n. dial. pronunciation of the ew in few, as deu (dew), fewe, hewen, schewen.

Early ME. eu with e like the é in Fr. été, as hewe *hue*, knew (knēw), newe, pret. þrew (þrēw), see § 112.

Early ME. iu (later written ew) nearly like the ew in NE. few, as sniwen *to snow*, spiwen, triwe *true*.

ou with o like the o in NE. not, as bowe (OE. boga) *bow*, pp. fouhten, knowen, squle, þouhte.

Early ME. *ou* nearly like the *o* in NE. *no*, as *bōwes branches*, pl. *inowe enough*, *plōwes ploughs*, see § 114, 2.

*ui* (= the *u* in NE. *put* + *i*) generally written *oi*, as *enointen to anoint*, *point point*, see § 207.

#### B. THE CONSONANTS.

§ 24. The ME. consonant-system was represented by the following letters:—*b, c, d, f, g, ȝ, h, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, þ, v (u), w, x, y, z*.

Of the above letters *b, d, f, j, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v (u), w, x, y* had the same sound-values as in Modern English. The remaining letters require special attention, see §§ 13–20.

*c* had a threefold pronunciation: 1. Before guttural (back) vowels and liquids it had the *k*-sound, as *cat, cōld, cuppe; clēne, craft*. 2. Initially and medially before palatal vowels it had the sound of voiceless *s* in Fr. words, as *citee, deceiven*. 3. It was occ. used to represent the combination *ts*, as *blecen* = OE. *bletsian to bless*, *milce* = OE. *milts mercy*. The simple affricata was written *ch*, and when doubled *cch (chch)*, as *child, kichene; crucche, wrecche*.

*g* had a twofold pronunciation: 1. Initially it was a voiced explosive (stop), as *gāte, glād, gnat, gōd, grēne*. 2. Medially before vowels it had the sound *dʒ* (= the affricata *j* and *dg* in NE. *judge*) in Fr. words, as *chargen, jugen*. The combination *ng* had the sound *ŋg* beside *ndʒ* according as it represented OE. guttural or palatal *ng*, as *long, singen, ping*, beside *crengen (cringen), sengen (singen)*; and similarly with double *gg* (= OE. guttural *gg* and palatal *cg*), as *dogge, frogge, stagge*, beside *brigge, cuggele, seggen to say*, and also in Fr. words, as *pledge pledge*.

*ȝ* had a threefold pronunciation: 1. Initially like NE. *y* in *ye*, as *ȝard, ȝernen, ȝong*. 2. In early ME. a voiced guttural or palatal spirant like the *g* often heard in NE. *sagen* beside *siegen*, as *bōȝe later bōwe bow*, *draȝen later drawnen*,



beside *flēȝen* later *fleien* to *fly*. 3. Finally and before *t* it was a voiceless guttural or palatal spirant like the *ch* in NHG. *noch* beside *ich*, as *burȝ* (*burgh*), *douȝ* (*dough*), *douȝter* (*doughter*), beside *hēȝ* (*hēh*) *high*, *fiȝten* (*fighten*).

Initial *h* (except in the combination *hw* = *χw*) was an aspirate like the *h* in NE. *hand*, as *hand*, *hous*. In other positions it was a voiceless spirant like the *ȝ* in 3 above, which came to be written for it in early ME.

*sch* from OE. *sc* (gen. written *sch* in early ME., and later also *ssh*, *sh*, and in Ken. *ss*) was like the *sh* in NE. *ship*, as *schaft*, *waschen*, *fisch*; *ssrive* to *shrive*, *vless* *flesh*.

*p* (*th*) was used to express both the voiceless and voiced sounds like the *th* in NE. *thin*, *cloth*; *father*, *then*, as *baȝ*, *ping*; *brōȝer*, Ken. *pet that*.

*z* had the *ts* sound in early ME., as *milze* = OE. *milts* *mercy*; in later ME. it was also used for voiced *s*, especially in the *Ayenbite*, as *zelver* *silver*, *pouzond*.

#### STRESS (ACCENT).

§ 25. The accentuation in native ME. words was essentially the same as in OE., that is, in all uncompounded words the chief accent fell upon the stem-syllable and always remained there even when suffixes and inflexional endings followed it. In compound words the chief accent fell upon the stem-syllable of the first component part if the second part was a noun or an adjective; and on the stem-syllable of the second part if this was a verb or derived from a verb.

## CHAPTER II

## THE OE. VOWEL-SYSTEM

§ 26. OE. had the following vowel-system:—

Short vowels	a, æ, e, i, o, u, y
Long	,, ā, ǣ, ē, ī, ō, ū, ȳ
Short diphthongs	ea, eo, ie, io
Long	,, ēa, ēo, iē, iō

In the next chapter we shall trace the ME. development of the above simple vowels and diphthongs of accented syllables. And in doing so we shall first deal with the independent and then with the dependent changes which they underwent in ME. By independent changes we mean those which took place independently of neighbouring sounds, and by dependent changes those which depended upon or were due to the influence of neighbouring sounds. But before entering upon the subject it will be useful to state here certain dependent changes which took place during the OE. period, as some of them are of special importance for ME.

§ 27. The diphthongs *ēa*, *ēo*, *iō* became monophthongs during the OE. period before *c*, *g*, *h*, *hs*, *ht*; before a liquid + *c*, *g*, *h*; and after the initial palatals *c*-, *g*-, and *sc*-. And then the resultant long or short vowels had the same further development in ME. as the corresponding older long or short vowels. See *EOE. Gr.* § 67 and notes.

§ 28. Before *h* and *h* + consonant *ea* became *æ* (= ME. *a*, §§ 43, 59) in Anglian, but *e* in late WS. and also in the eleventh century in Kentish, as *sæh* *he saw*, *fæx* *hair*, *flæx* *flax*, *wæxan* *to grow*, *æhta* *eight*, *fæht* *he fought*, *hlæhtor* *laughter*, beside *seh*, *fex*, *flex*, *wexan*, *ehta*, *feht*, *hlehtor*.

A few of these latter forms occur in Chaucer, as **flex**, **wex**, **wexe(n)** beside **waxe(n)**. See §§ 107, 110.

§ 29. After initial palatal **c**-, **g**-, **sc**- **ea** became **æ** in Anglian (= ME. **a**), but **e** in late WS., whence **a** beside **e** in ME., as **chaf** (OE. **ceaf**) *chaff*, **ʒaf** *he gave*, **ʒat** *gate*, **schal** *shall*, beside **chef**, **ʒef**, **ʒet**, **schel**.

§ 30. Before **ht** **eo** became **i** in later WS. (rarely **y**), Ken. and the south Midlands when not followed by a guttural vowel in the next syllable, but became **e** in the north Midlands and the North (cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 67 and notes 1, 4), whence we have in early ME. **riht** beside **reht** (mod. n. dialects **reit**) *right*, but **fehten** (OE. **feohtan**) in all the early ME. dialects. The common form **fiȝten** was a ME. new formation.

§ 31. **io** became **i** in Anglian before **c**, **h**+**s** or **t**, and before a liquid+**c**, as **birce** *birch-tree*, **milc** *milk*, **mixen** *dunghill*, **gebirhta(n)** *to make light*, **rihta(n)** *to set straight*, see § 62 and *EOE. Gr.* § 67, note 1.

§ 32. The OE. **eo**, **io** which occurred after initial palatal **sc**-, **g**- were probably never either rising or falling diphthongs. The **e**, **i** merely indicated the palatal nature of the preceding **sc**-, **g**- as is shown by the ME. forms, and in OE. itself **sco**- occurs beside **sceo**-, as **schort** (OE. **scort** beside **sceort**), and similarly ME. **bischof**, **schot** *missile*, &c. ; **ʒon** (OE. **geon**) *yonder*, Orm **ʒocc** (OE. **geoc**) *yoke*. And in like manner OE. has **scu**-, **iu**- (**i** = **ʒ**) beside **sceo**- (**scio**-), **geo**- (**gio**-), as **schulen** (OE. **sculon** beside **sceolon**, **sciolon**) *they shall*, **ʒung**, **ʒong** (OE. **iung** beside **geong**, **giong**) *young*.

§ 33. The OE. initial combinations **scǣ**-, **scǿ**- were also often written **sceǣ**-, **sceǿ**- with **e** merely to denote the palatal pronunciation of the **sc**-, as **sceacan** beside **scacan** (ME. **schāken**) *to shake*, **sceolde** beside **scolde** (ME. **schōlde** beside the unstressed form **schōlde**) *should*, **sceōp** beside **scōp** (ME. **schōp**) *he created*.

§ 34. The **ēa** from older **ǣ** (= Anglian and Ken. **ē**) became

ē after the initial palatals *c*-, *g*-, *sc*- in some of the late WS. dialects, which like Anglian and Ken. ē remained in ME. (§ 52), as *cēp cheap*, *cēs he chose*, *gēfon they gave*, *gēr year*, *gēt he poured out*, *scēp sheep*, *scēt he shot* = ME. *chēp* beside *chēp*, *ȝēr*, *schēp*, &c.

§ 35. Before *c*, *g*, *h* ēa became ē through the intermediate stage æ in late Anglian and WS., which remained in early ME., as *bēcen* (earlier *bēacen*) *beacon*, *ēc also*, *lēc leek*, *bēg ring*, *ēge eye*, *lēg he told lies*, *tēg rope*, *hēh* (older *hēah*) *high*, *tēh he drew*. For the further development of the ē before *g*, *h*, see § 107.

§ 36. In Anglian ēo became ē before *c*, *g*, *h*, and *h* + *s* or *t*, and then the ē remained in early ME. like the ē from ēo in other positions, see §§ 65, 107, as *rēca(n)* *to smoke*, *sēc* (older *sēoc*) *sick*, *flēga(n)* *to fly*, *flēge fly*, *pēh thigh*, *wēx he grew*, *lēht* which later became *liht*, *liht a light*.

§ 37. io became ī in Anglian before palatal *c* and *ht*, as *cīcen* from older \**kioken chicken*, *lihta(n)* = WS. *liehtan to give light*.

§ 38. *weo*-. The OE. initial combination *weo*-, of whatever origin, became *wu*- (rarely *wo*-) in late WS., and *wo*- in late Northumbrian, but remained in Mercian and Kentish (= ME. *we*-), and then the *-u*-, *-o*-, *-eo*- had the same further development in ME. as old *u* (§ 48), but generally written *o* in the combination *wur*-, *o* (§ 47), and *eo* (§ 60). These three different developments were preserved in these areas in ME., as *wurld*, generally written *world*, and similarly *work*, *worpen to throw*, *worþ*, *worþen to become*; *world*, *work*, *worpen*, *worþ*, *worþen*; *world*, *werk*, *werpen*, *werþ*, *werþen*. And we also have *suster* older *swuster* (OE. *sweostor*), *swurd*, generally written *sword*, beside *soster* older *swoster*, *sword*, *swerd*.

§ 39. *wio*-. OE. *io* in the combination *wio*- generally became *wu*- in late WS. and Anglian, but remained in Kentish (= ME. *e*, *i*). And before gutturals it became *i* in

Anglian (*EOE. Gr.* § 63 and note 2). The *wu*-forms generally remained in ME. In ME. we accordingly have *wu*-, *wi*- and *we*-forms representing the different areas, as *bitwux*, *bitwix*, *bitwex* *between*, *cude* (*code*, *o* = *u*), *cwide*, *cwede* *cud*, *cwuc*, *cwic*, *cwec* *alive*, *wuke*, *wike* (§ 85), *weke* *week*, *wodewe* (*o* = *u*), *widewe* (*widwe*) *widow*, *wude* (*wode*) *wood*, see § 85.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. VOWEL-SYSTEM OF ACCENTED SYLLABLES

##### 1. INDEPENDENT CHANGES

##### A. THE SHORT VOWELS.

§ 40. OE. *æ* became *a*, and *y* was unrounded to *i* during the ME. period in those areas where it had remained in OE. (§ 49), but the vowels *a*, *e*, *i*, *o*, *u* underwent no independent changes.

##### a

§ 41. OE. *a* in closed syllables = ME. *a*, as *asse* (OE. *assa*), *cat* (OE. *catte*), *sak* (OE. *sacc*), and similarly *asche*, *castel*, *crabbe*, *fals* *false*, *mattok*, *palme*, *stagge*, *waschen*. *basken* (ON. *baðask*) *to bathe*, *casten* (ON. *kasta*), *happe* (ON. *happ* *good luck*).

§ 42. Before nasals Germanic *a* became rounded in early OE. to a sound intermediate between the *o* in NE. *on* and the *a* in NHG *mann*. In the oldest OE. it was nearly always written *a*, in the ninth century it was mostly written *o*, but in late OE. it became pure *a* again except in some parts of Mercia (west Midlands) where it became full *o*, and

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has remained as such in many of the dialects in this area down to the present day. Examples in closed syllables before a single or double nasal, and a nasal + a voiceless consonant are: *man, mon; pank, ponk*; and similarly *anker, bank, bigan, camp, can, pret. drank, hamme ham, plante, ram, ran, swam, swan, pret. wan, wanten. ransaken* (ON. *rannsaka*). For OE. *a(o)* before a nasal + a voiced stop see §§ 72-4.

NOTE.—*penne, pen then, whenne, when when, beside panne, pan, whanne, whan* were the unstressed forms. The preterites *cam he came, nam he took* beside *cōm* (OE. *c(w)ōm*), *nōm* (OE. *nōm*) were ME. new formations.

æ

§ 43. *æ* had become a sound lying between *e* and *æ* (generally written *e*) during the OE. period in Kent and the districts bordering on it, and also in the sw. Midlands, as *feder futher, gled, smel, pet, wes*. From about 1300 the *e* was supplanted by *a* in the sw. Midlands, and also in Kent and the districts bordering on it from about 1400. This change of *e* to *a* was to some extent not a sound-change, but merely a letter-change imported from those parts of the country which regularly had *a* from older *æ*, as is evidenced by the preservation of the *e*-sound in some of the dialects, especially the Kentish, down to the present day. In all the other parts of the country OE. *æ*, of whatever origin, became *a* in the early part of the twelfth century, although the *æ* often continued to be written until a much later date, e. g. in the Proclamation of London (1258). Examples in closed syllables are: *appel* (OE. *æppel, æpl*), *baþ* (OE. *bæþ*), *craft* (OE. *cræft*), *þat* (OE. *þæt*), and similarly *after, at, ax axe, bak, blak, fasten, fat vat, glad, glas, gnat, gras, pret. hadde (hafde) pp. had, harvest, hat, paþ, sad, smal, staf, what, pret. bad* (OE. *bæd*), and similarly *bar, brak, brast, sat, spak, was*. For OE. *æ* in open syllables see § 79, 3.

NOTE.—ME. *whether* (OE. *hwæper*) is the unstressed form which became generalized. *hedde had*, *wes was* beside *hadde*, *was were* the unstressed forms. South Midland pret. sing. forms like *breek*, *seet*, *speek* were new formations with the long vowel of the plural levelled out into the singular. The northern form *quās* (*quhās*), and the Midland and southern *whōs whōs* (OE. *hwæs*) were new formations from the nom. *quā* (*quhā*). *whō whō* (OE. *hwā*) *who*.

## e

§ 44. OE. *e* in closed syllables = ME. *e*, as *bed* (OE. *bedd*), *better* (OE. *bet(e)ra*, *bettra*), *helpen* (OE. *helpan*), and similarly *benche*, *bersten to burst*, *beste*, *delven*, *fresch*, *helle hell*, *helm*, *hen*, *melten*, *men*, *nest*, *net*, *quenchen*, *sellen*, *steppen*, *swelten to die*, *preschen*, *wegge wedge*, *west*, *egg* (ON. *egg*), *legge* (ON. *feggr*) *leg*. For OE. *e* before *ld*, *nd*, *ng*, see §§ 71, 73, 74.

## i

§ 45. OE. *i* = ME. *i* in closed and generally also in open syllables (see § 85), and was often written *y* before and after nasals, *u* (= *v*), *w*, and finally, as *bidden* (OE. *biddan*) *to pray*, *bid*, *cribbe* (OE. *cribb*), *grim* (OE. *grimm*), *sinken* (OE. *sincan*), *ping* (OE. *ping*), and similarly *biginnen*, *bil axe*, *bitter*, *brid bird*, *bringen*, *chin*, *crisp*, *disch*, *drinken*, *finger*, *fisch*, *flicche fitch*, *his*, *is*, *lid*, *lippe*, *ribbe*, *ring*, *schilling*, *schip*, *schrinken*, *sitten*, *spinnen*, *springen*, *stingen*, *stinken*, *swimmen*, *twig*, *pis*, *bridde third*, *winter*; *hider hither*, *liver*, *sive sieve*, *pider thither*, *witen to know*; pret. pl. and pp. of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as *biten* (OE. *biton*, *biten*), and similarly *biden*, *driven*, *gliden*, *riden*, *risen*, *schinen*, *writen*, *hitten* (ON. *hitta*) *to hit*, *ill* (ON. *illr*), *skil* (ON. *skil*), *skin* (ON. *skinn*). For OE. *i* before *ld*, *mb*, *nd*, see §§ 71-3.

§ 46. Late OE. *i*, of whatever origin, + *ht* remained

throughout the ME. period in the northern and north Midland dialects, but became lengthened to *ī* in later ME. in the south Midland and southern dialects, as *niht*, *nīzt*, *night*, *night* (early OE. *neaht* later *niht*), and similarly *miȝt* sb., *miȝti* adj., pret. *miȝte*; *kniȝt* (early OE. *cneoht* later *cniht*) *boy*, and similarly *riȝt*; *siȝt* (early WS. *gesiehp* later *gesihp*, -*siht*) *sight*; *diȝten* (OE. *dihtan* from Lat. *dictāre*) *to set in order*, and similarly *pliȝt*, *wiȝt* *thing, creature, &c.*

o

§ 47. OE. *o* in closed syllables = ME. *o*, as *bord* (OE. *bord*), *borwen* (OE. *borgian*) *to borrow*, pp. *holpen* (OE. *holpen*), *þorn* (OE. *þorn*), and similarly pp. *borsten* (*brosten*) *burst*, *box*, *broþ*, *colt*, *corn*, *flok*, *folk*, *folwen* *to follow*, *forke*, *fox*, *frogge*, *frost*, *god*, *hoppen*, *hord*, *horn*, *hors*, *knotte* *knot*, *lok*, *morwe* (*morwen*, *morȝen*) *morning, morrow*, *norþ*, *ofte*, *orchard*, *oxe*, *port* *harbour*, *sorwe* (*sorȝe*) *sorrow*, *stork*, *storm*, *top*.

u

§ 48. OE. *u* = ME. *u* in closed and generally also in open syllables (see § 85). From about the middle of the thirteenth century *o* came to be written for *u* before and after nasals, *u* (= *v*), and *w*. The writing of *o* for *u* in these positions became pretty general towards the end of the century. In late ME. *o* was also generally written for *u* when followed by a single consonant + vowel (§ 9). This use of *o* for *u* is later than that of *u* for *y* = *ü* (§ 49), but earlier than the writing of *ou* for *ū* (§ 56). Examples are: *bukke* (OE. *bucca*), *ful* (OE. *full*), *hunger honger* (OE. *hungor*), and similarly *butter*, *clubbe* (ON. *klubba*), *cursen*, *zung zong* *young*, *huntere hontere*, *plukken*, *pullen*, *sum som* *some*, *sunne sonne* *sun*, *tunge tonge* *tongue*, *wulf wolf*, *wulle wolle* *wool*, pret. pl. and pp. of strong verbs belonging to



Class III (§§ 403-4), as *runnen* *ronnen* (OE. *runnon*, *runnen*), and similarly *bigunnen* *bigonnen*, *drunken* *dronken*, *sungen* *songen*, *wunnen* *wonnen*; *cumen* *comen* (OE. *cuman*) *to come*, *dure* *dore* (OE. *duru*) *door*, and similarly *huni* *honi* *honey*, *luve* *love*, *nute* *note*, *sumer* *somer*, *sune* *sone* *son*.

## y

§ 49. OE. *y* appears in ME. partly as *i*, partly as *e*, and partly as *ü* (written *u* from about 1100 onwards).

1. It became unrounded to *i* in late OE. or early ME. in all the northern counties, in a great part of the east Midland counties, including Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and the districts bordering on these counties, as well as in parts of the south-western counties, especially Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire.

2. It became *e* in Kent and parts of Middlesex, Sussex, Essex, and Suffolk during the OE. period, and remained as such in ME. and also in many of the modern dialects of this area, see *ED. Gr.* § 109. In Chaucer the forms with *e* are nearly as numerous as those with *i*. A few of the *e*-forms have crept into standard NE., as *fledged* (mod. n. dialects *flgd*), *knell*, *kernel*, *left* adj.

3. In all other parts of the country, including the west Midlands, it remained and was written *u* until about the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to *i*; see, however, § 125. The London dialect also belonged to the *ü*-area in early ME. as is evidenced by the *ü*-forms in the Proclamation of London (1258). The writing of *u* for *y* is earlier than that of *o* for *u* (§ 9), both of which are due to the influence of Anglo-French orthography.

Examples are: *brigge* *bregge* *brugge* (OE. *brycg*) *bridge*, *dippen* *deppen* *duppen* (OE. *dyppan*) *to dip*, *kin* (*kyn*) *ken*, *kun* (OE. *cynn*) *race*, *generation*, *kissen* *kessen* *kussen*

(OE. *cyssan*) to *kiss*, *sinne* (*synne*) *senne* (*zenne*) *sunne* (OE. *synn*) *sin*, and similarly *birpe*, *cripel*, *dint*, *dine* *din*, *disi* *foolish*, *fillen*, *fixene* *vixen*, *first*, *hil*, *hirdel*, *kichene*, *king*, *kirnel*, *listen to please*, *listen to listen*, *lift left*, *mille*, *pit*, *rigge ridge*, *schitten to shut*, *sister* (ON. *syster*), *stiren*, *pinken to seem*, *pinne* (*pynne*), *winne* (*wynne*) *joy*. For the writing of *y* for *i* see § 45. For OE. *y* before *nd* see § 73.

### B. THE LONG VOWELS.

§ 50. During the ME. period OE. *ā* became *ō* in the dialects south of the Humber, *ō* became *ū* in the dialects north of the Humber, and *ȳ* was unrounded to *ī* in those areas where it had remained in OE. (§ 57), but the vowels *æ*, *ē*, *ī*, and *ū* underwent no independent changes.

*Summary -  
yes all  
LONGS*

#### ā

§ 51. OE. *ā* had become long open *ō* in all the dialects south of the Humber by about the year 1225. The change of *ā* to *ō* did not take place throughout this large area at one and the same time. In some dialects, especially the southern, it undoubtedly took place in the latter half of the twelfth century and in others later, e. g. it had not taken place in the east Midland dialect of Orm at the time he wrote the *Ormulum* (about 1200). But it must have taken place before the influx of early French loan-words like *dāme*, *fāble*, *rāge* (§ 195), and before the lengthening of early ME. *ǣ* in open syllables, as *nāme*, *māken*, &c. (§ 79), otherwise these two types of words would also have been included in the change of *ā* to *ō*. The *ō* was sometimes written *oa* (*ao*) and from the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written *oo* in closed syllables and when final. In the dialects north of the Humber the *ā* remained until about the end of the thirteenth century, when it became long open *ē*, although the *ā* was mostly retained in writing, and from

the time of Barbour (1375) it was often written *ai*, *ay* (cp. § 121). Throughout this large area OE. *ā*, the long *ā* in early French loan-words, and early ME. *ǣ* in open syllables all fell together in *ē*. This great characteristic difference between the ME. development of OE. *ā* in the dialects north and south of the Humber has been preserved in the modern dialects right down to the present day. On the other hand the modern dialects north of the Humber still preserve the distinction in development between OE. *ā* and early ME. *ǣ* in open syllables (§ 81), whereas in the other dialects they have generally fallen together just as in the standard language. Examples are: *bōn bȝon bān* (OE. *bān*) *bone*, *bōt bȝot bāt* (OE. *bāt*) *boat*, *grōpen grāpe* (OE. *grāpian*) *to grope*, *mōre märe* (OE. *māra*) *more*, *tō tȝo tā* (OE. *tā*) *toe*, and similarly *bōr*, *bōpe both*, *brōd*, *clōp*, *gōn to go*, *gōst ghost*, *gōt*, *hōl whole*, *hōm*, *hōt*, *lōf*, *nōn none*, *ōn one*, *ōte oats*, *ōp*, *rōd*, *sōr*, *strōken*, *tōde toad*, *pōs those*, *wō voe*, *wōt I know*; the pret. sing. of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as *arōs*, *bōd*, *bōt*, *drōf*, *schōn*, *slōd*, *smōt*, *strōd*, *wrōt*.

NOTE.—The *ō* from OE. *ā* was probably a low-back-narrow-round vowel like the *a* in NE. *all*, whereas the ME. *ō* which arose from OE. *ǣ* in open syllables was probably a mid-back-wide-round vowel (§ 81). Although the two sounds have fallen together in the NE. standard language they are still kept apart in some of the north Midland dialects, the former having become *uə* (*oə*) and the latter *oi*, as *uəm oəm* (OE. *hām*) *home*, but *prōit* (OE. *prote*) *throat*.

### ǣ

§ 52. In dealing with the history of OE. *ǣ* in ME. it is necessary to distinguish between *ǣ* = Germanic *ǣ* and the *ǣ* = the *i*-umlaut of *ā*.

1. Germanic *ǣ* had become long close *ē* in the non-WS. dialects in early OE., but by the end of the OE. period the *ǣ*

had spread again to Middlesex, Essex, parts of the south Midland counties, and parts of East Anglia. From these latter areas words containing this  $\tilde{a}$ -sound gradually crept into most of the other areas during the ME. period as is evidenced by the modern dialects.

2.  $\tilde{a}$  = the i-umlaut of  $\bar{a}$  became long close  $\bar{e}$  in Kentish during the OE. period, and remained as such throughout the ME. period. In all the other dialects the  $\tilde{a}$ -sound generally remained in ME.

In consequence of the spreading of  $\tilde{a}$  in 1, Chaucer sometimes has  $\bar{e}$  beside  $\tilde{e}$ , as  $d\bar{e}d$  beside  $d\tilde{e}d$  *deed*, generally  $r\bar{e}den$ ,  $w\bar{e}re(n)$  beside  $dr\tilde{e}de$  *dread*,  $sl\bar{e}pen$ ; and probably through the influence of Kentish  $\bar{e}$  in 2 he occasionally has  $\tilde{e}$  beside  $\bar{e}$ , as  $cl\tilde{e}ne$ ,  $l\bar{e}den$ ,  $l\bar{e}ren$  *to teach*, beside  $cl\tilde{e}ne$ ,  $l\tilde{e}den$ ,  $l\tilde{e}ren$ .

In those areas where the  $\tilde{a}$ -sound in 1 and 2 had remained throughout the OE. period the  $\tilde{a}$  was preserved in writing until about the end of the twelfth century, and occasionally even later, as in the Proclamation of London (1258). In the *Ormulum* (about 1200) it was also used to express Germanic  $\tilde{a}$  as well, although this  $\tilde{a}$  had become  $\bar{e}$  in Orm's dialect hundreds of years before his time. This was due to Orm having adopted the classical WS. system of orthography. Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography the  $\tilde{a}$  was generally supplanted by  $\bar{e}$  from about the end of the twelfth century, and from the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written *ee* in closed syllables and when final. After OE.  $\bar{e}a$  had been monophthongized to  $\tilde{a}$  (§ 63) the  $\bar{e}a$  came to be written sometimes for old  $\tilde{a}$  in the twelfth and early thirteenth century, and occasionally also in the fourteenth century. This change of  $\tilde{a}$  to  $\bar{e}$  (*ee*), generally written  $\bar{e}$  (*ee*) in grammars, was not a sound-change, but merely an orthographical change. The sound itself, viz. a low-front-narrow vowel like the *ai* in NE. *air*, remained in ME.

In those areas where the long close ē had remained at the end of the OE. period, it also remained in ME. and was written e. From the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written ee in closed syllables and when final. In grammars it is generally written ē (ēē).

Examples of 1 are: dēd (Angl. and Ken. dēd) dēd (WS. dāed) *deed*, slēpen (Angl. and Ken. slēpan) slēpen (WS. slāpan) *to sleep*, and similarly bēre *bier*, ēl, ēven *evening*, hēr *hair*, hēring, lēten, mēde *meadow*, mēl *meal, repast*, nēdle, rēden, sēd, spēche, strēte, bēre *there*, brēd, wēpen, whēre, wēte *wet*; pret. pl. of strong verbs belonging to classes IV (§ 407) and V (§ 408), as bēren, ēten, sēten, wēren, &c. mēden (WS. māden) *maiden*, pret. sēde (WS. sāde) *he said*.

Examples of 2 are: dēlen (Angl. and WS. dālan) dēlen (Ken. dēlan) *to divide*, clēne (Angl. and WS. clāne) clēne (Ken. clēne), and similarly blēchen, brēde *breadth*, ēni *any*, ēvre *ever*, hēlen, hēte, hēp, lēden, lēne *lean*, lēnen *to lend*, lēren *to teach*, lēven, rēchen, sē *sea*, sprēden, swēten, tēchen, whēte.

NOTE.—1. The ē = OE. æ was a low-front-narrow vowel like the ai in NE. *air*, whereas the ME. ē which arose from OE. ē in open syllables was probably a mid-front-wide vowel (§ 80). Although the two sounds have fallen together in standard NE. they are still kept apart in many of the north Midland dialects, the former having become ie and the latter ei, as liēd (OE. lādan) *to lead*, but eit (OE. etan) *to eat*.

2. In parts of the se. Midlands (Middlesex, Essex, Herts, &c.) it became usual to write ā for ē (= Germanic æ and the i-unlaut of OE. ā, as dād, lāten; lāden, tāchen) from about 1100 until well on into the thirteenth century, and then the ā was gradually ousted by ē. The writing of ā for old æ in these parts was only a letter-change. The æ could not have become ā in sound, otherwise it would have fallen together with old ā; and furthermore the modern dialects in these parts have no trace of ME. ā for æ, but see, however, LUICK, *Hist. Gr.*, pp. 345-6.

## ē

§ 53. OE. long close ē, of whatever origin, = ME. long close ē. From the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written *ee* in closed syllables and when final, and in later ME. it was often written *ie* through the influence of French orthography. Examples are: 1. Germanic ē, as *hēr* (OE. *hēr*) *here*, *mēde* (OE. *mēd*) *meed, reward*. 2. The pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VII (§ 414), as *lēt* (OE. *lēt*) *he let*, and similarly *hēt* *he was called*, *slēp* *he slept*. 3. The i-umlaut of OE. ō, as *dēmen* (OE. *dēman*) *to judge*, *fēt* (OE. *fēt*) *feet*, and similarly *bēche*, *blēden*, *fēden*, *fēlen*, *gēs*, *grēne*, *grēten*, *hēden*, *kēne* *keen*, *kēpen*, *mēten*, *quēne*, *sēken* (*sēchen*), *sēmen*, *spēde* *success*, *swēte*, *tēp*, *wēpen* *to weep*. 4. In Latin loan-words, as *bēte* (OE. *bēte*, Lat. *bēta*) *beetroot*, *crēde* (OE. *crēda* *creed*, Lat. *crēdō* *I believe*). 5. OE. lengthened ē in monosyllables, as *hē* *he*, *mē* *me*, *þē* *thee*, *wē* *we*.

## ī

§ 54. OE. ī = ME. ī which was very often written *y* before and after nasals, *u* (= *v*) and *w* (§ 9), and in Chaucer *y* is also very common in other combinations, as *fif* *five* (OE. *fif*) *five*, *sīde* (OE. *sīde*) *side*, *tīme* *tīme* (OE. *tīma*) *time*, *þīn* *þīn* (OE. *þīn*) *thine*, *wīs* *wīs* (OE. *wīs*) *wise*, and similarly *blīpe*, *īren*, *īs* *ice*, *īvi*, *knīf* (ON. *knīfr*), *līf*, *līken* *to please*, *līm*, *mīle*, *pīpe*, *swīn*, *tīde*, *wīf*, *whīle*, *whīt*; in the present of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396), as *bīten* (OE. *bītan*) *to bite*, and similarly *bīden*, *chīden*, *glīden*, *rīden*, *schīnen*, *smīten*, *strīden*, *prīven*, *wrīten*.

## ō

§ 55. In the dialects south of the Humber OE. long close ō = ME. long close ō, also very often written *oo* in closed syllables and when final from the fourteenth century onwards.

In the dialects north of the Humber the *ō* became *ū* through the intermediate stage *ō̄* about 1300, and was generally written *u* through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography, and sometimes *o*, later also *ui*, *oi* (cp. § 121), but it was not written *o* before nasals, *u* (= *v*), after *w*, and when final. Many of the northern dialects, especially the Scottish, have preserved the *ū*- or *ō̄*-sound down to the present day. Examples are: *bōk būk* later *buik* (OE. *bōc*) *book*, *gōs gūs* later *guis* (OE. *gōs*) *goose*, *lōken lūke(n)* later *luike(n)* (OE. *lōcian*) *to look*, and similarly *blōd*, *brōd*, *brōk*, *brōm*, *brōper*, *cōk*, *cōl*, *dōm*, *dōn* (*dō*), *fōd*, *fōde*, *gōd*, *hōd*, *hōk*, *mōder*, *mōne moon*, *mōneþ*, *nōn*, *ōper*, *pōl*, *rōf*, *rōk*, *rōte*, *schō*, *sōne*, *sōt*, *spōn*, *stōl*, *tōþ*; the pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VI (§ 411), as *awōk*, *forsōk*, *schōk*, *schōp he created*, *stōd*, *swōt*, *tōk*. Pret. sing. *cōm* (OE. *c(w)ōm*), *nōm* (OE. *nōm*) *he took*, beside the ME. new formations *cam com*, *nam nom*.

### ū

§ 56. OE. *ū* = ME. *ū*. Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography it was often written *ou* (*ow*) from the second half of the thirteenth century and became general in the fourteenth. By the time of Chaucer it was generally written *ow* when final and frequently also in open syllables, especially before *l*, *n*, and *v*, but in other positions it was mostly written *ou* (§ 9). Examples are: *brū brow* (OE. *brū*) *brow*, *dūn down down* (OE. *dūn*) *down*, *hūs hous* (OE. *hūs*) *house*, *mūþ mouþ* (OE. *mūþ*) *mouth*, and similarly *abouten about*, *broun*, *cloud*, *clout*, *cou* (*cow*), *croume crumb*, *douke duck*, *douve dove*, *foul*, *goune*, *hou* (*how*), *loud*, *louken to close*, *lous*, *mous*, *nou* (*now*), *oule* (*owle*), *our*, *out*, *ploume plum*, *proud*, *rouz rough*, *roum*, *schour*, *schroud*, *souken to suck*, *souþ*, *toun*, *pou* (*pow*), *poume* (*poumbe*) *thumb*, *pousend*.

ȳ

§ 57. The development of OE. *ȳ* in ME. went parallel with that of short *y* (§ 49), viz. it appears in ME. partly as *ī*, partly as *ē*, and partly as *ū* (written *u*, *ui*, rarely *uy* from about 1100 onwards, see § 9).

1. It became unrounded to *ī* in late OE. or early ME. in all the northern counties, in a great part of the east Midland counties, including Lincolnshire, Norfolk, and the districts bordering on these counties, as well as in parts of the south-western counties, especially Devonshire, Dorsetshire, and Wiltshire.

2. It became *ē* in Kent and parts of Middlesex, Sussex, Essex, and Suffolk during the OE. period, and remained as such in ME. In the modern dialects of this area the *ē* has become *ī*, as *mīs* = ME. *mēs* *mice*.

3. In all other parts of the country including the west Midlands, it remained and was written *u*, *ui* (rarely *uy*), until about the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to *ī*.

Examples are: *brīde* *brēde* *brūde* (OE. *brȳd*) *bride*, *fīr* *fēr* (*vēr*) *fūr* (OE. *fȳr*) *fire*, *hīden* *hēden* *hūden* (OE. *hȳdan*) *to hide*, and similarly *hīde*, *hīre*, *hīve*, *līs*, *mīs*, *prīde*; *līpen* (ON. *hlȳða*) *to listen*, *mīre* (ON. *mȳrr*) *mire*, *skīe* (ON. *skȳ* *cloud*) *sky*.

### C. THE DIPHTHONGS.

§ 58. All the diphthongs *ĕa*, *ĕo*, *īo* became monophthongs in late OE. except in Kentish, although they mostly continued to be written long after this sound-change had taken place. *īe*, which only occurred in the WS. area, had become monophthongized to *ȳ*, *ī* by the time of Alfred, although the *īe* mostly continued to be written until a very much later date.



1. *The Short Diphthongs.*

## ea

§ 59. OE. *ea*, of whatever origin, became *æ* in the early part of the eleventh century, although the old spelling with *ea* was often preserved in writing until a much later date. This *æ* fell together with old *æ* and along with it became *a* in the early part of the twelfth century (§ 43). Examples are: *all* (OE. *eall*) *all*, *fallen* (OE. *feallan*) *to fall*, *barn* (OE. *bearn*) *child*, and similarly *calf*, *callen*, *chalk*, *half*, *halle hall*, pret. *halp he helped*, *malt*, *salt*, *scharp*, *swal(e)we swallow*, *wall*; *arm*, *dar(r) I dare*, *ȝard*, *hard*, *harm*, *sparke*, *sparwe sparrow*, *sward*, *swarm*, *warm*; *chaf*, *ȝaf he gave*, *ȝat.gate*, *schadwe shadow*, *schaft*, *schal*.

## eo

§ 60. *eo*, of whatever origin, became *ö* in late OE. in all the dialects, although the *eo* was often preserved in writing until well on into the ME. period. The *ö* then became unrounded to *e* during the twelfth century in the northern, east Midland, and south Midland dialects, but remained in the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish) until about the end of the fourteenth century, when it also became unrounded to *e*. In these latter dialects the *ö*-sound was written *eo* and later through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography *o*, *ue* and sometimes *u*. Examples are: *herte*, *heorte horte huerte hurte* (OE. *heorte*) *heart*; *erpe*, *eorpe urpe* (OE. *eorpe*) *earth*, and similarly *berken to bark*, *cherl churl*, *derk*, *erl Earl*, *erdest*, *ferre fur*, *kerven to carve*, *self*, *smerten*, *sterre star*, *sterven to die*, *ȝel(o)we yellow*, *hert hart*, *heven(e)*, *seven(e)*, *werk work*.

## ie

§ 61. WS. *ie*, of whatever origin, was monophthongized to *y*, *i* by the time of Alfred, although it generally continued

to be written until a very much later date, cp. § 49 and *EOE. Gr.*, § 67. The chief sources of the *ie* were: 1. The i-umlaut of *ea* after initial palatal *c-, g-, sc-*; 2. the i-umlaut of *ea* which arose from breaking; 3. the i-umlaut of *io*; and 4. Germanic *e* after initial palatal *c-, g-, sc-*. For 1, 2, and 4 the other dialects regularly had *e* in OE. and ME., and for 3 they had *io* (*eo*) in OE. and *i* (*e*) in ME., see § 62. In ME. the *y* had the same further development as old *y* (§ 49). Examples are: *chüle cold, coldness*; *güst gist, gest quest*; *schüppen schippen, scheppen to create*; *chürren chirren, cherren to turn*; *dürne, derne dark, hidden*; *üldre, eldre elder*; *füllen, fellen to fell*; *süllen sellen* (WS. *siellan, syllan, sellan*), *sellen to sell*; *zürnen zinnen, zernen to desire*; *hürde hirde, herde shepherd*; *ürre irre, erre anger*; *bigüten bigiten, bigeten to beget*; *züllen, zellen to yell*.

### io

§ 62. *io*, of whatever origin, had become *eo* during the OE. period except in Northumbrian and a part of n. Mercian where the *io* remained. In ME. the *eo* had the same development as old *eo* (§ 60), and the *io* became *i*, as *melk*, milk (OE. *miol(u)c, meol(u)c milk*, and similarly *selk*, silk, *selver*, silver; *hirde* (Nth. *hiorde*) *shepherd*, and similarly *irre anger*.

## 2. The Long Diphthongs.

### ēa

§ 63. *ēa*, of whatever origin, became *æ* in Anglian and WS. in the early part of the eleventh century, and thus fell together with old *æ* = the i-umlaut of *ā* (see § 52 and note 1), although the *ēa* was often preserved in writing until well on into the ME. period. Through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography the *æ* was generally supplanted by *ē*

from about the end of the twelfth century, and from the fourteenth century onwards it was very often written *ee* in closed syllables and when final. This change of *ǣ* to *ē* (*ēē*), generally written *ē* (*ēē*) in grammars, was not a sound-change, but merely an orthographical change. The sound itself, viz. a low-front-narrow vowel like the *ai* in NE. *air*, remained in ME. See § 52. In Kentish *ēa* became a rising diphthong in the second half of the twelfth century, which was generally written *ea*, *ia*, *ya*, *yea*, and in the fourteenth century *e*, rarely *ye*, which seems to indicate that by this time it had become long *ē*. Examples are: *dēd*, dead *dyead* (OE. *dēad*) *dead*; *lēpen*, leapen *lyapen lyeapen* (OE. *hlēapan*) *to leap*, and similarly *bēm*, *bēne* *bean*, *bēten*, *brēd*, *chēpe* *cheap*, *dēf*, *dēp*, *drēm*, *ēre* *car*, *ēst*, *flē* *flea*, *grēt*, *hēp*, *hēved* (*hēd*) *head*, *lēf*, *rēd* *red*, *slēn* *to slay*, *stēm*, *stēp*, *strēm*; pret. *chēs* *he chose*.

§ 64. The non-WS. dialects had *ē* for early WS. *ēa* (= Germanic *ǣ*, § 52) after initial palatal *c-*, *g-*, *sc-*, which remained in ME., as *chēke* *cheek*, *ȝēr* *year*, *ȝeven* *they gave*, *schēp* *sheep*, cp. § 34.

#### ēo

§ 65. *ēo*, of whatever origin, became *ō* in Anglian and WS. in late OE., although the *ēo* was often preserved in writing until well on into the ME. period. The *ō* then became unrounded to close *ē* during the twelfth century in the northern, east Midland, and south Midland dialects, but remained in the west Midland and southern dialects (except Kentish, see § 67) until about the end of the fourteenth century, when it also became unrounded to *ē*. In these latter dialects the *ō*-sound was written *eo* and later through the influence of Anglo-Norman orthography *o*, *ue* and sometimes *u*. The *ē* was very often written *ee* in closed syllables and when final, and in later ME. also often *ie* (§ 9). Examples are: *dēp* *diep*, *deop* *duep* *dup* (OE. *dēop*) *deep*;

bēf *pief*, peof *puef* þuf (OE. *pēof*) *thief*, and similarly bē *a bee*, bēden *to bid*, bēn *to be*, clēven *to cleave*, crēpen, dēd *deer*, fēnd *fiend*, flēn *to flee*, flēs *fleece*, frēnd *friend*, frēsen, knē, lēf *dear*, rēd *reed*, rēken *to smoke*, schēten *to shoot*, sēke *beside sike sick*, sēn *to see*, sēpen, snēsen, wēde *weed*; the pret. of strong verbs belonging to class VII (§ 414), as bēt *he beat*, hēld *he held*, lēp *beside lepte he leapt*, wēp *beside wepte he wept*.

NOTE.—In some words the *éo* became a rising diphthong *eó* which in ME. became *ō* by absorption of the first element. This often gave rise to double forms, as chōsen, schōten *beside chēsen, schēten*; ȝōde *beside ȝēde* (OE. *ge-eóde* *beside ge-éode*) *he went*.

### ie

§ 66. WS. *ie*, of whatever origin, was monophthongized to *ȳ*, *ī* (cp. § 9 and *EOE. Gr.*, § 67) by the time of Alfred, although it generally continued to be written until a very much later date. The chief sources of the *ie* were: 1. The i-umlaut of *īo* = *īō* (*ēō*) in the other dialects (cp. § 67); and 2. the i-umlaut of *ēa* = *ē* in the other OE. and ME. dialects. In ME. the *ȳ* had the same further development as old *ȳ* (§ 57). Examples are: dēre, dūre *dire* (OE. *dīore*, *dēore*, *dīere*) *dear*, hēren, hūren *huiren* (§ 9) *hīren* (OE. *hēran*, *hīeran*) *to hear*, and similarly alēsen *to deliver*, bēȝen *later beien* (cp. § 107, 6) *to bend*, bilēven *to believe*, chēse, ēken *to increase*, nēde, slēve, stēle *steel*, stēpel.

### īo

§ 67. Old *īo* had become *ēō* in all the dialects except the Kentish before the end of the OE. period, and then had the same further development in these dialects as old *ēō* (§ 65). On the other hand old *ēō* had become *īō* (also written *īa*) in Kentish by the end of the OE. period, and then had the same further development as old *īō*. The *īō* became *īe* in early

ME. Then it became a rising diphthong medially, written *ie*, *ye* and sometimes *i*, *e*, which became  $\bar{e}$  in the fourteenth century, but remained finally and then later became  $\bar{i}$  also written  $\bar{y}$ . Examples are: *diep dyep* (OE. *dēop*) *deep*, *diere dyere* (OE. *dīore*, *dēore*, WS. *dīere*) *dear*, and similarly *liese lyese* *to lose*, *lyeve lēve* *dear*, *viend vyend* *fiend*, but *bī bȳ* (OE. *bīon*, *bēon*) *to be*, *vīȳ* (OE. *fīēon*) *to flee*, *vrī vrȳ* (OE. *frīo*, *frēo*) *free*. See LUICK, *Hist. Gr.*, p. 338.

## 2. DEPENDENT CHANGES

### (1) THE LENGTHENING OF SHORT VOWELS BEFORE CONSONANT COMBINATIONS.

§ 68. From our knowledge of ME. phonology it is clear that short vowels and short diphthongs must have been lengthened some time during the OE. period before certain consonant combinations, especially before a liquid or a nasal + a homorganic voiced consonant, that is before *ld*, *rd*, *nd*, *mb*, *ng*, *rl*, *rn*, and probably also before *rp*, *rs* + vowel. This lengthening of short vowels and short diphthongs took place some time before the end of the ninth century. But the lengthening did not take place when the consonant combination was immediately followed by another consonant, as pl. *lambru* : *lāmb* *lamb*, comp. *lengra* : *lāng* *long*, *heardra* : *hēard* *hard*, pret. *sende* from \**sendde* : inf. *sēndan* *to send*, pl. *cildru* : *cīld* *child*, *hundred* : *hūnd* *hundred*, pl. *sculdru* : *scūldor* *shoulder*, *wundru* : *wūndor* *wonder* &c.; nor in unstressed forms, as *sceolde* *should*, *under*, *wolde* *would*.

§ 69. In the transition period from OE. to ME., in early ME., and during the ME. period the long vowels were shortened again before some of the combinations, especially before *rd*, *rl*, *rn*, *rp*, and *rs*, so that the combinations with which we are specially concerned are only *ld*, *mb*, *nd*, and *ng*. And even before these latter combinations

shortening began to take place before **mb**, **nd**, and **ng** in the course of the late twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries.

§ 70. From what is said below it will be seen that whether the long vowels were preserved or became shortened again depended partly upon the nature of the following consonant combination, partly upon the nature of the vowel, and partly upon difference of dialect. The lengthening before **ld** was generally preserved in all the dialects. Shortening had taken place before **nd**, **ng**, and **rd** in Orm's dialect before he wrote the *Ormulum*, as *senndenn* to *send*, *brinngenn* to *bring*, *harrd* *hard*. For OE. **a(o)** before nasals (§ 42) Chaucer has **o** before **nd**, **ng**, but **ō** before **mb**, as *hond*, *lond*, *stondon*, but *cōmb*, pret. *clōmb* *he climbed*, *lōmb*, *wōmb*. In his dialect long **ē** (= OE. **īo** (**ēo**), **ē**) remained before **nd** and **ng**, as *fēnd* *fiend*, *hēng* *he hung*, and also **ī** before **mb**, **nd**, as *climben*, *finden*, but **i** before **ng**, as *bringen*; **ū** remained before **nd**, as *ground*, but was shortened before **mb**, **ng**, as pp. *clomben* (**o** = **u**, § 9) *climbed*, *songen* *sung*; **a**, **o** were shortened before **rd**, as *hard*, *warde*, *bord*, *hord*. For **ē** before **rd** he has **ē**, as *bērd* (OE. *beard*) *beard*, *yērd* (OE. *geard*), but for OE. **ē** he has **e**, as pret. *herde* (OE. *hērde*) *he heard*, pp. *herd* (OE. *hēred*), pret. *ferde* (OE. *fērde*) *he behaved*. **ī**, **ū** were shortened to **i**, **u** in all the north Midland and northern dialects and are still short in all the modern dialects of this area, but remained long in the other dialects, as *bīnden*, pp. *bounden*. Long vowels and diphthongs before the consonant groups which originally caused lengthening were shortened in monosyllabic forms during the late OE. period in Kentish, but were preserved in the inflected forms, as *lamb* : *lāmbē*, *hand* : *hānda*, *hund* *hound* : *hūndas*, *eald* : *ēalde* which in ME. became *ealde*, *yalde* (cp. § 63). This gave rise in ME. to many new formations through levelling out in different directions.

§ 71. *ld*: The lengthening before *ld* was generally preserved in all the dialects.

Anglian *ā* from older *a* (= early WS. and Ken. *ea*, later *ēa*) remained in early ME. in the northern dialects, but in the Midland and some of the southern dialects it became *ō* at the same time as old *ā* became *ō* (§ 51). In the other southern dialects the later WS. *ēa* became *ē* at the same time as old *ēa* became *ē* (§ 63). A few of these southern forms with *ē* are found in Chaucer, as *hēlde to hold*, *wēlde to rule*, although the *ē* had generally been ousted by the *ō* of the other dialects in the early part of the thirteenth century. Examples are: *cōld*, northern *cāld*, southern *chēld cold*, and similarly, *bōld*, *fōlden*, *hōlden*, *ōld*, pret. *sōlde*, *tōlde*, pp. *sōld*, *tōld*.

*ē*, also written *ee*, as *fēld* (early OE. *feld*, later *fēld*) *field*, *chēlde cold* sb., *ēlde old age*, *ȝēlden to recompense*, *sēld seldom*, *schēld shield*.

*i*, as *chīld* (early OE. *cild*, later *cīld*), and similarly *mīlde*, *wīlde*.

*ō*, as *gōld* (early OE. *gold*, later *gōld*) = early NE. *gūld*, *Gould*, beside *gōld* = NE. *gold*, and similarly *mōlde mould*; pret. *schōlde*, *wōlde* beside the unstressed forms *schōlde* (Orm *shollde*), *wolde* (Orm *wollde*).

§ 72. *mb*: *cōmb* (cp. § 51), northern *cāmb* (early OE. *camb*, later *cāmb*), and similarly *lōmb*, later *lamb* formed from the pl. *lambren*, *wōmb*, pret. *clōmb he climbed*.

*i*, as *clīmben* *clȳmben* (early OE. *climban*, later *clīmban*).

*ū*, as *dūmb* *doumb dumb*, beside pp. *clomben* (*o* = *u*) *climbed*.

§ 73. *nd*: Before *nd* all vowels were short or became shortened in the late twelfth and the early thirteenth century in the northern and north Midland dialects. In the other Midland and the southern dialects they all, except *ī* = early OE. *i*, *y*) and *ū*, became shortened during

the ME. period, but the approximate date of this shortening is difficult to fix.

The *ō* from older OE. *a* (*o*) before nasals remained until well on into the ME. period in the south Midland and the southern dialects, and then became shortened to *o*, hence Chaucer has *o*, but we have *a* in the north Midland and the northern dialects. And then the forms with *o* were gradually ousted by those with *a* towards the end of the fourteenth century. Examples are: Early ME. *hōnd*, *hānd*, later *hond*, *hand*; *stōnden*, *stānden*, later *stonden*, *standen*, and similarly *band* sb., pret. *band* *he bound*, *land*, *sand*, *strand*, &c.

*ē*, as early ME. *ēnde* (early OE. *ende*, later *ēnde*) *end*, *bēnden* *to bend*; later *ende*, *benden*, and similarly *blenden*, *renden*, *spenden*; *sēnden*, later *senden*, but pret. always *sende* from older \**sendde*, and similarly with the preterite of the other verbs. The ME. *ē* from OE. *īo* (*ēo*), see § 65, seems not to have been regularly shortened before *nd*, as *frēnd* (OE. *frīond*, *frēond*) beside *friend* formed from the compound *friendschipe* (§ 92, 2), but always *fēnd* (OE. *fīond*, *fēond*), because there was no compound beside it.

*i*, as *blīnd*, *blind* (early OE. *blind*, later *blīnd*), and similarly *līnde* *lime-tree*, *rīnde*, *wīnd*; inf. *bīnden*, *binden* (early OE. *bindan*, later *bīndan*), and similarly *fīnden*, *grīnden*, *wīnden*, &c.; *kīnde*, *mīnde*.

*ū*, as *grūnd* (generally written *ground*), *grund* (early OE. *grund*, later *grūnd*), and similarly *hound*, *pound*, *sound* *healthy*, *wounde* *wound*, past participles like *bounden*, *founden*, *wounden* *wound*.

§ 74. *ng*: The OE. lengthened *i*, *ū* became short again in early ME. in all the dialects, as *finger*, *ring*, *ping*; *zung* (*song*) *young*, *hunger* (*honger*), *tunge* (*tonge*) *tongue*; inf. *singen*, pp. *sungen*, and similarly *springen*, *stingen*, *wringen*.

The OE. lengthened *ā* (*ō*), *ē* became short again in the



latter part of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth century, as *lāng*, *lōng*, later *lang*, *long*, and similarly *hongen* to *hang*, *strong*, *þong*, *wrong*. *lenger* *longer*, *lenþe* (§ 263), *mengen* (*mingen*) to *mix*, *streng* (*string*) *string*, see § 132.

§ 75. Neither in OE. nor in ME. were short vowels lengthened when the consonant combination which usually caused lengthening was followed by a third consonant, see § 68. Examples are: Orm *allderrmann* : *āld* *old*; comp. *eldre* *eldere* *elder*, *seldere* : *sēld* *seldom*; pl. *children*, *childre* : *child*, *wildernes* : *wild*; sing. and pl. *schuldre* (Orm sing. *schulldre*) *shoulder*. *dumbnesse* : *doumb* *dumb*, whence the back-formation *dumb*; pl. *lambre*, *lambren* : *lāmb*, whence the back-formation *lamb*; *timbre* *timber*; *slumbren*. *candle*, *gandre* (OE. *gandra*), *wandren*; *frendli*, *frendschipe* : *frēnd*, whence the back-formation *frend* beside *frēnd*; *hindren*, *spindle*; *blundren*, *hundred*, *wundren*, pl. *wundres*, from which a new singular *wunder* was formed. *þunder* always had short *u*, because it was from OE. *þunor*. Pl. *engles*, whence new sing. *engel* *angel*. Many exceptions to the above arose in ME. through new formations from the simple forms which regularly had long vowels, as *childhēde*, *-hōde* : *child*; *frēndli* beside *frendli* : *frēnd*; *sēlden* (Ellesmere MS. *seelden*) beside *selden* : *sēld*, &c.

§ 76. Long vowels also arose in early ME. through the loss of *þ* in the medial combinations *-þn-*, *-þr-* of words which had accented and unaccented forms side by side, as *hēn* (ON. *hepan*) *hence*, *sēn*, *sīn* (OE. *sippan*, *sioppan*) *since*, *þēn* (ON. *þepan*) *thence*, *wēn*, earlier *whēpen* (ON. *hvapan*) *whence*, *whēr* (OE. *hweper*) *whether*, *ōr*, early ME. *op(e)r*. Then after the analogy of forms like ME. *hider*, *þider*, *whider* with *i* were formed *hipen*, *þipen*, *whipen*, which also became *hīn*, *þīn*, *whīn*.

(2) THE LENGTHENING OF SHORT VOWELS IN  
OPEN SYLLABLES.

§ 77. ME. short vowels, of whatever origin, were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms during the thirteenth century. The lengthening of *a, e, o* to *ā, ē, ō* took place in all the dialects, whereas that of *i, u* to *ē, ō* only took place in some of them. And as the lengthening of *a, e, o* took place earlier than that of *i, u* and with an entirely different result, we shall deal with them in two separate groups.

1. *a, e, o*

§ 78. The lengthening of *a, e, o* to *ā, ē, ō* took place somewhat earlier in the dialects north of the Humber than in those south of it, but in both areas the vowels had been lengthened before the end of the first half of the thirteenth century. In the dialects north of the Humber the new *ā* fell together with old *ā* (§ 51), but in the dialects south of it they were kept apart, because old *ā* had become *ō* (§ 51) before the lengthening of *a* to *ā* took place. The new *ē, ō* differed in quality from the ME. *ē* which arose from OE. *æ, ēa* (§§ 52, 63), and the *ō* which arose from OE. *ā* (§ 51 and note). The new *ē, ō* were probably mid-front-wide like the long of the short *e* in standard NE. *men*, and mid-back-wide-round like the first element of the diphthong in standard NE. *so*, and the older *ē, ō* were low-front-narrow like the *ai* in standard NE. *air* and low-back-narrow-round like the *a* in standard NE. *all*. Although the two pairs have fallen together in standard NE. and may also have fallen together in the south Midland and southern dialects during the ME. period, they certainly did not fall together in the north Midland and northern dialects, because they are still kept apart in the modern

dialects of this area, e. g. in Yks., Lanc., Derb., Stf. the new ē has become ei, but the old ē has become iə or some such diphthong. The new ȝ has become ȝi and the older ȝ has become uə, ȝə or some such diphthong.

ā

§ 79. 1. From OE. a, as bāken (OE. bacan), hāre (OE. hara), and similarly āpe, awāken, bāpen, cāre, drāke, hāten to *hate*, lāke, māken, nāked, rāke, sāke, spāde, wāden, wāven. bāre (OE. masc. pl. bare) *bare*, dāle (OE. pl. dalu), gāte (OE. pl. gatu), and similarly blāde, glāde *glad*, grāve, lāte, smāle *small*, tāle. tāken (ON. taka), and similarly cāke, gāsen to *gaze*, gāpen to *gape*.

2. From OE. a (o) before nasals, as nāme, but nōme in the west Midlands (OE. nama), see § 42, and similarly gāme, lāme, lāne, schāme, &c.

3. From OE. æ, south-eastern dialects e (§ 43), as fāder, fēder, vēder (OE. fæder, feder) *father*, rāven, rēven (OE. hræfen, hrefen) *raven*, see § 102; and similarly āker *acre*, fīeld, brāsen *brazen*, hāsel, pl. pāpes, wāter, &c.

4. From OE. ea, of whatever origin (§ 59), as āle (OE. ealu) *ale*, bāle (OE. bealu) *bale*, *evil*, and similarly cok-chāfer, māre *mare*, schāde, &c.

NOTE.—1. For māken, tāken the northern and north Midland dialects had mak, tak through early loss of the final -en, and these forms are still preserved in the modern dialects of this area. The pret. and pp. mādē, mād (maad) for older mākede, maked arose from the loss of intervocalic k. From the new pret. and pp. was then formed a new present mā(n), after the analogy of which was formed a new present tā(n) for tāken. These presents are also still preserved in the modern north Midland dialects.

2. hāven, hāvest, hāveþ (hap) beside bihāven are the unstressed forms.

ē

§ 80. 1. From OE. *e*, as *bēren* (OE. *beran*) *to bear*, *mēte* (OE. *mete*) *meat*, *stēlen* (OE. *stelan*) *to steal*, and similarly *bēre bear*, *brēken*, *ēten*, *ēven even*, *knēden*, *pēre pear*, *spēken*, *spēre spear*, *swēren*, *tēren*, *trēden*, *wēren to wear*, *wēven*. *gēten* (ON. *geta*), *lēken* (ON. *leka*), *to leak*. See § 11.

2. From OE. *eo*, of whatever origin (§ 60), as *bēver* (OE. *beofor*) *beaver*, *mēde* (OE. *meodu*) *mead (drink)*, and similarly *mēle*, *smēre ointment*, *tēre, tar*, &c.

NOTE.—For *brēken*, *gēten*, *lēken* the northern and north Midland dialects had *brek*, *get*, *lek* through early loss of the final *-en*, and these forms are still preserved in the modern dialects of this area.

ō

§ 81. The *ō* from OE. *o* was very often written *oo* from the fourteenth century onwards, as *flōten flōtten* (OE. *flotian*) *to float*, *pōlen* (OE. *polian*) *to bear, suffer*, *prōte* (OE. *prote*) *throat*, and similarly *hōpen*, *nōse*, *ōpen*, *ōver*, *rōse*, *smōke*. Pp. *bōren* (OE. *boren*), and similarly *brōken*, *forlōren*, *stōlen*, *swōren sworn*. *cōle* (OE. *col*, gen. *coles*) with the vowel of the inflected levelled out into the uninflected form, and similarly *hōle* (OE. *hol*), see § 103.

§ 82. Lengthening also took place in dissyllables with two consonants belonging to the second syllable, as *nāvle*, also written *nāvele* (OE. *nafola*) *navel*, *wāvren*, also written *wāveren* (ON. *vafra*) *to waver*; gen. *ȝēstes* beside nom. *ȝest*, from which was formed a new nom. *ȝēst yeast*, cp. § 97.

§ 83. Just as long vowels were shortened before single consonants in trisyllabic forms, so also short vowels remained unlengthened before a single consonant in trisyllabic

forms, see § 87. Examples are: *feper* beside early ME. *feþer* (OE. *feþer*) *feather*, *gaderen* (OE. *gaderian*) *to gather*, and similarly *berie* *berry*, *scateren*, *stameren*, *þe latere* (NE. *latter*) beside *lāter* (NE. *later*), &c. *bōdi* (OE. *bodig*) *body*, beside pl. *bōdies* from which a new singular *bōdi* was formed; *māni* (OE. *manig*) beside early ME. pl. *manie* (OE. *manige*) from which a new singular *mani* was formed, and similarly with a large number of other words, as *peni*, *popi*; *disi* *foolish*, *bisi* *busy*, *hevi*, *stedi*, &c.

## 2. i, u

§ 84. The result of the lengthening of *i*, *u* to *ē*, *ō* through the intermediate stage *ī*, *ū* was entirely different from that of *a*, *e*, *o* to *ā*, *ē*, *ō*. In the latter case there was only a change in quantity, but in the former case there was a change both in quantity and quality of the vowels. This change of *i*, *u* to *ē*, *ō* took place in the dialects north of the Humber and in parts of the north Midland dialects in the latter half of the thirteenth century, and in the East Anglian dialects about a century later. In the Scottish dialects the *ē*, *ō* were later written *ei*, *oi* (*ui*), see § 10.

§ 85. In dealing with the lengthening of *i*, *u* to *ē*, *ō* it is necessary to distinguish two types of words:—

1. Old dissyllabic forms which lost their final *-e* before lengthening in open syllables took place, so that in this type lengthening only took place in the inflected forms, as *wik* (OE. *wice*) *week*: pl. *wēkes*, *sun* (OE. *sunu*) *son*: pl. *sōnes*, from which new singulars were often made, as *wēk*, *dōr*, *sōn*, &c.

2. Old uninflected dissyllabic forms which became trisyllabic when inflected or had suffixes, as *ēvel* (OE. *yfel*, *ifel*) *evil*: gen. *iveles*, *sēker* (OE. *sicor*) *secure*: *sikerli*, *sōmer* (OE. *sumor*) *summer*: pl. *sumeres*, from which new uninflected forms were often made, as *bisi* *busy*, *mikel*, *widow*; *sumer*, *þun(d)er*, &c.

Other examples of type 1 are: northern *lif* : *lēves* *he lives*; *schip*, *smiþ*, *wik* : pl. *schēpes*, *smēpes*, *wēkes*; *cum* : *cōmes* *he comes*; *dur* *door*, *wud* *wood* : pl. *dōres*, *wōdes*; and of type 2: northern *bēsi* *busy* : *business*, *mēkel* : *mikelness*, *wēdow* : pl. *widowes*. East Anglian *clēpe(n)* *to call*, *lōve(n)* *to love*; northern and East Anglian *bētel* *beetle*, *crēpel* *cripple*, *wēvel* *weevil*, &c. The past participles of strong verbs belonging to class I (§ 396) also regularly had ē, as *drēven* *driven*, *rēsen* *risen*, *wrēten* *written*, but they generally came to have i through new formations. Already in late OE. the past participles with -t- often had -tt- beside -t-, as *bitten*, *written* beside *biten*, *writen*, which gradually gained the upper hand, and then the -i- in this type of verb was extended analogically to the other verbs, as *driven*, *riden*, *risen*, &c.

NOTE.--The *ō* which arose from *u* became *ū* in the northern dialects at the same time as old *ō* became *ū* about 1300, see § 55.

### (3) THE SHORTENING OF LONG VOWELS.

§ 86. Long vowels and long diphthongs were shortened before certain consonant combinations during the OE. period, and especially in late OE. :—(a) Before combinations of three consonants, as pl. *bremblas* beside sing. *brēm(b)el* *bramble*. (b) Before two consonants in trisyllabic and polysyllabic forms, as *enlefan* from older *\*ænlefan* *eleven*, *hlammæsse* beside older *hlāfmæsse* *Lammis*, *samcucu* (from *\*sāmi-*, older *\*sāmi-*) *half dead*, gen. *twentiges* : nom. *twēntig* *twenty*, *blissian* beside older *blīpsian* *to rejoice*, pl. *deorlingas* : *dēorling* *darling*. (c) Before double consonants + r, as gen. *attres* beside nom. *ātor*, whence new nom. *attor* beside *ātor* *poison*; *blæddre*, *næddre* beside older *blædre* *bladder*, *nædre* *adder*, comp. *hwittra* : *hwit* *white*, gen. *foddres* beside nom. *fōdor*, whence new nom. *foddor* beside *fōdor* *fodder*, comp.

deoppra : *dēop deep*, see *EOE. Gr.* § 146. (d) Before double consonants, as acc. *ænne*, *enne* beside older *æne* *one*, *prittig* beside older *þritig* *thirty*; *wimman* beside older *wifman* *woman*. (e) In trisyllabic forms before single consonants, as *haligdōm* : *hālig holy*, pl. *ænige*, -u : sing. *ānig any*, pl. *cicenu* : sing. *cicen* *chicken*, whence new singular *cicen*, *superne* : *sūþ south*, pl. *heafodu* : *hēafod head*. (f) And in late OE. and early ME. long vowels began to be shortened before the consonant combinations which caused lengthening in early OE., see § 68.

§ 87. In the following treatment of the shortening of long vowels, we shall, as a rule, not distinguish between shortenings which took place in OE. and those which only took place in ME. So far, then, as ME. is concerned it may be said that all long vowels, whether original long vowels or long vowels which arose from old long diphthongs, were shortened in late OE. and early ME. before double consonants and before all consonant combinations other than those which caused the lengthening of short vowels (§ 68). Long vowels were also shortened before single consonants in trisyllabic forms of which many arose in ME. from the development of svarabhakti vowels, as in *brēþeren* from older *brēþren* (§ 152, 1), or were new formations made from the uninflected forms, as in the pl. *wēpenes* for older *wēpnēs* formed from the sing. *wēpen* *weapon*. This kind of shortening took place in the thirteenth century, as Orm still preserved the long vowels in this position. And just as long vowels were shortened in words of this type, so also short vowels remained unlengthened before single consonants in trisyllabic forms (§ 83).

§ 88. Before dealing with the shortening of the various separate long vowels before consonant combinations we will deal with the shortening in trisyllabic forms, as *clavere* beside *clōver* (OE. *clāfre*) *clover*, see § 51; *laverke* later *larke* (OE. *lāwerce*) *lark*; *erende* beside older *ērende* (OE.

ǣrende) *errand*, and similarly *everē*, pl. *heringes*, *neverē*, *redili* beside *rēdi*, *selinēsse* beside *sēli*, *sēli* *happy*, pl. *wepenes* from older *wēpenes* *weapons*; pl. *stirōpes* (OE. *stīrāpas*) *stirrups*; *breperen* from older *brēperen*; *slumeren* : OE. *slūma* *slumber*. From the trisyllabic were often made new dissyllabic forms with short vowel, as *hering*, *redi*, *wepen*, &c., beside *hēring*, *rēdi*, *wēpen*, &c.

§ 89. In dealing with the shortening of long vowels before consonant groups it is necessary to take into consideration the question of chronology. When *ǣ* was shortened in OE. it became *æ* and then *a* in ME. (§ 43), but when ME. *ē* from OE. *ǣ* was shortened in ME. it became *e*, whence we have forms side by side in ME. with *a* and *e*. And similarly when *ēa* was shortened in OE. it became *ea* and then *a* in ME. (§ 59), but when ME. *ē* from OE. *ēa* (§ 63) was shortened in ME. it became *e*, whence we have forms side by side in ME. with *a* and *e*. When *ēo* was shortened in OE. it became *eo* and then *e* in ME. (§ 60), and when ME. *ē* from OE. *ēo* (§ 65) was shortened in ME. it became *e*, so that in this case the result was the same.

§ 90. *ā* became *a*, as *axen*, *asken* (OE. *āxian*, *āscian*) *to ask*, pp. *clad* from \**clādd* (OE. *clāpod*) *clothed*, *hatte* (OE. *hätte*) *is or was called*, *halwen* (OE. *hālgian*) *to hallow*, *halwes* (OE. *pā hālgan*) *Hallows*, *lammasse* (OE. *hlāf-mæsse*) *Lammas*. In comparatives like *bradder* : *brād*, *brōd*, beside the new formation *brōder*; *hatter* : *hāt*, *hōt*, beside the new formation *hōter* later *hotter*, see § 51.

§ 91. *ǣ* became *a*, *e*. It should be remembered that late OE. *ǣ* is of threefold origin, viz. Germanic *ǣ* (§ 52), the i-umlaut of *ā* (§ 52), and late OE. *ǣ* from older *ēa* (§ 63). Germanic *ǣ* became *ē* in Anglian and Kentish in early OE., so that the shortening in these dialects is always *e*, whether it took place in OE. or ME. *ǣ* the i-umlaut of *ā* became *ē* in early Kentish (§ 52), so that the shortening is always *e* in this dialect. In all the dialects we have *a* or *e* from late



OE. *ǣ* (= early OE. *ēa*) according as the shortening took place in OE. or ME. Examples are :—

1. **bladder**, **bledder** (late OE. *blæddre* older *blædre*) *bladder*, pret. *dradde*, *dredde*, pp. *drad*, *dred* *dreaded*, and similarly **ampti**, **em(p)ti** *empty*, **medwe** (OE. inflected form *mædwe*) beside *mēde* (OE. *mæd*) *meadow*, **nadder**, **nedder** *adder*, pret. *slepte*, *wrastlen*, *wrestlen* to *wrestle*.

2. **clansen**, **clensen** (OE. *clānsian*) to *cleanse*, **fat**, **fet** (OE. *fætt*) *fat*, and similarly **clanli**, **clenli** *cleanly*, **helpe** *health*, **laddre**, **leddre** *ladder*, **lafdi**, **lefdi** *lady*, pret. *lafte*, *lefte* *he left*, **lasse**, **lesse** *less*, **lasten**, **lesten** to *follow*, **wraþpe**, **wreþpe** *wrath*; pret. *ladde*, *ledde* (OE. *lædde* older *lædde*), pp. *lad*, *led* *led*, and similarly **cladde**, **cledde**, **clad**, **clad**; pret. *lente*, pp. *lent* (OE. *lāned*) *lent*; **spradde** **spreddre**, **sprad**, **spredd**; **swatte**, **swette** *sweated*; **ēni** (OE. *ēnig*) *any* beside ME. pl. *anie*, *enie* from which was formed a new singular *ani*, *eni*.

3. **biraft**, **bireft**: **birēven** (OE. *berēafian*) to *deprive*, **rob**, **chapman**, **chepman** (OE. *cēapman*), and similarly **grattre**, **grettre** *greater*, **laper** (OE. *lēapor*, gen. *lēāpres*) *lather*, **schepherde**.

§ 92. Late OE. *ē*, of whatever origin, became *e* :—

1. *ē* = i-umlaut of *ō*, as pret. **bledde** (OE. *blēdde*, older *blēdde*) *he bled*, and similarly **fedde**, **grette** *he greeted*, **kepte**, **mette**; **demde**, forms like *dēmde*, *wēnde* *he hoped* were ME. new formations from the present; **blessen**, **breþeren**. **twenti**, **ten** (Orm *tenn*) is a back-formation from forms like *tenpe*, *tenfōld*.

2. *ē* = OE. *ēo* (§ 65), as **devel** (OE. *dēofol*, gen. *dēofles*) *devil*, **lemman** (OE. *lēofmann*) *sweetheart*, and similarly **deppre** *deeper*, **ferþing**, **frendschiþe**, **seknesse**, **stepfader**; pret. **fell** (OE. *fēoll*) *he fell*, and similarly **crepte**, **lepte**.

3. Non-WS. *ēo* (*īo*) = early WS. *īe*, as **derling** (OE. *dēorling*, *dierling*) *darling*, and similarly **deppe** *depth*, **derre** *dearer*, **nexte**, **pefte**.

4. OE. i-umlaut of *ēa*, as *grettre* (OE. *grietra*) *greater*.

§ 93. *i* became *i*, as *children*, *childre* : *child*, *fifte* (OE. *fifta*) *fifth*, and similarly *Cristmesse*, *cristnen*, *fifti*, *liȝt* *light a light*, *liȝt light light*, *litel*, *lütel* (OE. *lītel*, *lýtēl*, gen. *lītes*, *lýtēles*), whence the ME. new formation *litel*, *lütel* *little*, *stiffer*, whence the new formation *stif* (OE. *stīf*) *stiff*, *wimman*, *wisdōm*.

§ 94. *ō* became *o*, as *fodder* (OE. *fōdor*, gen. *fōdres*), *gosling* : *gōs*, pret. *schodde*, pp. *schod* : *schōn* to *shoe*, and similarly *blostme*, *blosme* *blossom*, *bosme* *bosom*, *softe*. For the late OE. combination *ōht* from older *ōht* see § 113, 5.

§ 95. *ū* became *u*, as *dust* (OE. *dūst*) *dust*, *husbonde* : *hūs* (*hous*), *rust* (OE. *rūst*), *pursdai* (OE. *pūres-dæg*) *Thursday*, *puȝte* (OE. *puhte*, older *pūhte*) *it seemed*, *udder* (OE. *ūder*, gen. *ūdres*).

§ 96. Late OE. *i*, *ē*, *ū* from early OE. *ī* (§ 57) were regularly shortened to *i*, *e*, *ü* (written *u*), as *fist*, *vest*, *füst* (early OE. *fīst*), and similarly *filpe*, *þimel* (early OE. *þīmel*, gen. *þīmlēs*) *thimble*, *wischen*; pret. *hidde*, *hedde*, *hüdde* (early OE. *hīdde*), pp. *hid*, *hed*, *hüd* (early OE. *hīded*) *hid*, and similarly *kidde*, pp. *kid* *made known*.

§ 97. Long vowels were regularly shortened in closed syllables before such combinations as *-sch*, *-st*, but remained long in open syllables through the consonant combinations belonging to the second syllable. This gave rise to double forms in ME. according as the vowel of the uninflected forms was levelled out into the inflected forms or as the vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the uninflected forms. Regular forms were: *flesch* (OE. *flāsc*), gen. *flēsches*; *breſt* (OE. *brēost*), gen. *brēſtes*, whence *flesch*, *breſt*, beside *flēsch*, *brēſt*. At a later period one or other of the forms became generalized. Examples of the former are: *blast* (OE. *blāest*) *blast*, *breſt* (OE. *brēost*), *dust* (OE. *dūst*), *rust* (OE. *rūst*), *fist*, *vest*, *füst* (early OE.

fȳst), flesch (OE. flāsc), mesch (OE. māsce), wisch, wesch, wusch (early OE. wȳsc). Examples of the latter are: gāst, gōst (OE. gāst) *ghost*, Crīst, ēst (OE. ēast) *east*, prēst (OE. prēost) *priest*.

§ 98. From numerous examples given in the previous paragraphs it will be seen that long vowels were regularly shortened in derivatives and compounds when the stem-syllable was followed by one or more syllables with a strong secondary accent, as in *alderman* : ōld, *older* āld, *chapman* : OE. cēap, *Cristmesse* : Crīst, *frendli*, *frenschipe* : frēnd, *halidai* : OE. hālig *holy*, *lavedi*, *lafdi* (Orm *laffdig*) : OE. hlāfdige *lady*, *wildernesse* : wīlde, *wisdōm* : wīs, &c. This rule was, however, very often broken through new formations made from the simplex, as *frēndli*, *kīndnesse*, *wīsli*, &c. Cp. § 75.

§ 99. Through causes which have never been satisfactorily explained a few ME. words have *i* beside *e* for the shortening of ē, ĕ, as *briperen* beside *breperen*, pret. *fi* beside *fel* (OE. fēoll) *he fell*, *hipbremles* beside *hepbremles* (OE. hēopbremblas) *dog-roses*, from which were formed the simplex *hipe* beside *hepe* (mod. dialects *ep*), *hēpe* *hip*, and similarly *siknesse* beside *seknesse* (OE. sēcnes), whence *sik* beside *sek*, *sēk*, *silnesse* beside *selnesse* (OE. ge-sǣlignes), whence *sili* beside *seli*, *sēli*, *sēli*.

§ 100. Through causes which have never been clearly defined there was a tendency from about the beginning of the thirteenth century onwards in some dialects to shorten long vowels before a single consonant in monosyllables. And this kind of shortening became quite common in the fifteenth century. It is possible that the shortening started out from such monosyllables being used in the sentence before other words beginning with a consonant, and that then the shortened forms came to be used in other positions. Examples from the *Ormulum* are: *dæp* (OE. dēap) beside *dēp* *death*, pret. *drohh* (OE. drōh) beside *drōh* *he drew*,

comm (OE. c(w)ōm) *he came*, topp (OE. tōp) *tooth*, watt (OE. wāt) *beside wāt he knows*, &c. Forms like grat, gret (OE. grēat) *great*, hat *hot*, stif (OE. stif), swet *sweet* were new formations from the comparative gratter, gretter, &c.

§ 101. Long vowels were also shortened in unaccented forms, as an (OE. ān) *one*, an, but beside būt (OE. būtan) *except*, nat, not (OE. nāwiht, nōwiht, nāht, nōht) *nothing*, not, scholde (Orm sholde, solde) *beside schōlde should*, us (Orm uss) *beside ūs*, Orm þehh (OE. þēah) *beside þohh* (ON. \*þōh) *though*, wham, whom *beside whōm* (OE. hwām) *whom*, wolde (Orm wollde) *beside wōlde would*; and similarly with personal pronouns like mē, wē, þū, ȝē, hē.

#### (4) VARIABLE VOWEL LENGTH IN STEM-SYLLABLES.

§ 102. In ME. dissyllabic nouns and adjectives ending in -el, -em, -en, -er the vowel in the second syllable belonged originally to the uninflected forms only, see *EOE. Gr.* § 96. But already in OE. the vowel in the uninflected forms was generally levelled out into the inflected forms when the stem-syllable was short, as nom. sing. æcer, cradol, efen, gen. æceres, cradoles, efenes *beside* æcres, cradles, efnes. And so also in ME. we have side by side forms with and without the medial vowel, as akeres, cradeles, evenes *beside* akres, cradles, evnes. ME. short vowels in open stem-syllables regularly remained short in trisyllabic forms (§ 83), so that lengthening of the stem-vowel took place regularly in the uninflected forms only, but regularly remained short in the inflected forms. Then one of two things happened: Either the long vowel of the uninflected forms was levelled out into the inflected forms or the short vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the uninflected forms. This often gave rise to double forms in ME. itself, as crādel, wāter, ēven, ōpen *beside* cradel, water, even, open, and similarly fāder *beside* fader from

the inflected forms *faderes*, *fadres*. During the ME. period one or other of the doublets usually became generalized. And this difference in the stem-vowel of words of this type is reflected in standard NE. down to the present day, *ep. acre*, *brazen*, *cradle*, *cockchafer*, *hazel*, *ladle*, *maple*, *raven*, *staple*, *taper*; *beaver* (ME. *bēver* beside *bever*), *besom*, *evil*, *even*, *weasel*; *open*; *beside fathom*, *hammer*, *madder*, *saddle*, *shackle*, *swaddle*, *wattle*; *eleven*, *heaven*, *kettle*, *leather*, *nettle*, *seven*, *weather*; *bottom*, *copper*, *hovel*, *otter*. The modern dialects have often preserved the forms which have not survived in the standard language, as *brāzen*, *stāple*, *ēven*, *ōpen*.

The past participles of strong verbs, just like dissyllabic nouns and adjectives ending in *-en*, had double forms in ME., as *tāken*, *trēden*, *gēten*, *brōken*, *stōlen* beside *tāken*, *trēden*, *gēten*, *brōken*, *stōlen* (*stōln*). At a later period one or other of the forms became generalized, e.g. stems ending in *-r*, *-d*, *-t* generally had the short vowel, as *bōren* (*bōrn*), *gēten*, *sōden*, and the others generally had the long vowel, as *tāken*, *brōken*, *stōlen*, &c., which more or less agrees with the development in the NE. standard language. On the other hand the modern dialects, especially the northern and north Midland, have usually generalized the forms with short vowels, as *tāken*, *ēten*, *brōken*, *chōzen*, *spōken*, *trōden*, &c.

§ 103. OE. monosyllabic nouns and adjectives containing an *æ* (*a*), *e*, or *o* in the stem-syllable gave rise to double forms in ME. according as the vowel of the inflected forms was levelled out into the uninflected forms, or as the vowel of the uninflected forms was levelled out into the inflected forms. Examples of such double forms are:—*bāre* beside *bar* (OE. *bær*, gen. *bares*) *bare*, *lāte* beside *lat* (OE. *læt*, gen. *lates*) *late*, and similarly *cōle* beside *col* (OE. *col*, gen. *coles*) *coal*, *smāle* beside *smal*, *whāle* beside *whal*, &c. During the ME. period one or other of these forms became

generalized. Examples of the former kind of levelling are: *bāre*, *dāle*, *gāte*, *grāve*, *lāte*, *smāle*, *tāme*, *whāle*; *cōle*, *hōle* *hole*, *ȝōke* beside Orm's *ȝocc*. And examples of the latter kind of levelling are: *bak*, *baȝ*, *blak*, *bras*, *glad*, *glas*, *gras*, *paȝ*, *staf*; *brop*, *God*, *lok*, &c.

(5) THE FORMATION OF NEW DIPHTHONGS IN ME.

§ 104. One of the great characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the monophthongization of the typical OE. diphthongs in ME. (§ 58), and the development of a large number of diphthongs of an entirely different type, the second element of which contained an *i* (*y*) or *u* (*w*). Although late OE. had a small number of such diphthongs, e. g. *dæi* (Ken. *dei*) *day*, Ken. *meiden* beside older *megden* *maiden*, *mæw*, *mēu* *seagull*, gen. *sāwle*, *sāule* beside *sāwol* *soul*, cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 79, the number became greatly increased through sound-changes which took place in early ME., especially the vocalization of intervocalic palatal and guttural *ȝ*, and the development of glides between a vowel and a following palatal and guttural *h* (= *χ*), written *h*, *ȝ* or *gh* in ME.

In OE. the *-i* (*y*) and *-u* (*w*) type of diphthong only occurred finally and before consonants, and this must also have been the case in the earliest ME. period, but already in early ME. diphthongs seem to have arisen before a following vowel through a change of syllabic division in the combination vowel + *ȝ* (= *i*-consonant) or *w* + vowel whereby the *ȝ* or *w* was transferred from the second to the first syllable. When the first element was originally long it became shortened at the time the diphthong was formed. When such diphthongs are marked as long in ME. grammars the sign of length merely indicates that the first element was long before the formation of the diphthongs. It was very common, especially finally and before *n*, to write *y* for

the second element of *i*-diphthongs and *w* for the second element of *u*-diphthongs. The new diphthongs which arose in ME. were all falling diphthongs. On the other hand the Kentish diphthongs of the ME. period which arose from the OE. falling diphthongs *ēa*, *īo* (*ēo*) were rising diphthongs, see §§ 63, 67.

§ 105. The formation of new diphthongs in ME. was mainly due to the following causes:—

1. Intervocalic and final postvocalic *w* combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *u*-type in the first half of the twelfth century.

2. The vocalization of palatal and guttural *ɜ* to *i*- and *u*-consonant respectively. In the former case the *i*-consonant combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *i*-type, and in the latter case a diphthong of the *u*-type was formed. The vocalization of palatal *ɜ* to *i*-consonant took place already in late OE. after palatal vowels finally and before consonants, and in early ME. also medially between vowels. The guttural *ɜ* began to become *w* after back vowels before the end of the twelfth century and then later it combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *u*-type.

3. A great many of the ME. diphthongs arose from the development of a glide between a vowel and a following palatal and guttural *h* (= *χ*) in the thirteenth century. In the former case the glide eventually became *i*-consonant, and in the latter *u*-consonant which combined with the preceding vowel to form diphthongs of the *i*- and *u*-type.

The new diphthongs which arose in the native element of the language in the early ME. period were:—*ai*, *ei*, *au*, *ɛu*, *eu*, *ou*, *ou*, *iu*. Through sound-changes which took place during the ME. period the number of diphthongs became somewhat reduced. The *ei*, of whatever origin, generally became *ai* about 1300 and thus fell together with old *ai*, although the *ei* was often retained in writing until

a much later date. *eu* and *iu* fell together in *iu* about the end of the thirteenth century. In some dialects, e.g. Chaucer's, *ou* and *ou* fell together in *ou* in the early fourteenth century, but they did not fall together in all the dialects as is proved by their being still kept apart in many of the modern dialects, see *ED. Gr.* §§ 127-8, 166-8. To the above list of diphthongs may be added the *qi*, *ui* in French loan-words (§§ 206, 207).

### ai

§ 106. OE. *æ* + palatal *g* (= *ʒ*) became *æi* partly in late OE. and partly in early ME., and then the *æi* became *ai* (§ 43), also written *ay*, as *mai may* (OE. *mæg*) *he may*, *fai(e)r* (OE. *fæger*) *fair*, *hail* (OE. *hægl*) *hail*, *main* (OE. *mægen*) *power*, *saide* (OE. *sægde*) *he said*, and similarly *brain*, *dai* (gen. sing. and nom. pl. *daies dayes*) *fain*, pret. *lai*, *maiden*, *nail*, *snail*, *tail*; pp. *said*, *slain*.

NOTE.—In some parts of the North, Midlands, and the South *a* became *ai* before *sch* in the thirteenth century, as *aische* (OE. *æsce*, *asce*) *ashes*, *waischen* (OE. *wascan*) *to wash*, and the *ai* is still preserved in some of the north Midland and south-western dialects down to the present day (*ED. Gr.* § 27).

### ei

§ 107. Early ME. *ei*, also written *ey*, was of various origins, and in most cases it became *ai*, also written *ay*, about 1300.

1. From OE. *e* + palatal *g* (= *ʒ*), as *wei* (OE. *weg*) *way*, pp. *lezen leizen lei(e)n ley(e)n* (OE. *legen*) *lain*, *plezen pleizen pleien* (OE. *plegian*) *to play*, and similarly *eie awe*, *rein*, *seil sail*, pp. *sei(e)n sey(e)n* (Anglian *gesegen*) *seen*, *weien to weigh*; *leiest*, *leip*, pret. *leide*, pp. *leid laid*. The ME. northern and Midland infinitives *leyen* (*lei*, *lai*) and *seyen* (*seyn*, *sei*, *sai*) beside the southern regular forms *leggen*, *seggen* were new formations made from the second



and third persons singular *leyest*, *leiþ* and *seyest*, *seiþ*, and similarly the first pers. singular, the regular forms of which would be *legge* (OE. *lecge*), *segge* (OE. *secge*).

2. From Ken. *e* + palatal *ʒ* = WS. *æ* + palatal *ʒ* (§ 43), as *dei day*, *lei he lay*, *meiden*, *seide he said*.

3. From Ken. *e* + palatal *ʒ* = WS. *y* + palatal *ʒ* (§ 49), as *reie* (Ken. *rege*, WS. *ryge*) *rye*, and similarly *beien beyen* to *buy* (see *leyen* above).

4. From late OE. *e* (= early WS. *ea*) + *h* or *ht* (§ 28), as *eizte eighte* (early WS. *eahta*) *eight*, and similarly *leighter laughter*, pret. *seiʒ seigh* (Chaucer also *say*) *he saw*, *streight straight*.

5. From OE. *ǣ* or *ēa* + palatal *g* (= *ʒ*), as *clei cley* (OE. *clǣg*) *clay*, *neien* (OE. *hnǣgan*) to *neigh*; *dreiz he endured*, and similarly *grei*, *ei ey egg*, *eiper either*, *kei key key*, pret. pl. *leien they lay*, *seien* (OE. *sǣgon*) *they saw*, *weie weighing-machine*, cp. § 35.

6. Late OE. *ē*, of whatever origin, + *g* (= *ʒ*) or *h* (written *h*, *ʒ*, *gh* in ME.) had various developments in ME. which were due partly to the position of the *ʒ* and *h* in the word, partly to difference of dialect, and partly to new formations through levelling out in different directions:—

When the *ēʒ* stood before a following vowel at the time of the formation of diphthongs it generally became *ei* in the North and Midlands, but *ī*, mostly written *y*, through the intermediate stage *iʒ* in some parts of the Midlands, especially the south Midlands including the dialect of Chaucer, and the South, but the modern dialects show that the *ī* did not occur in the north Midlands, otherwise it would have become *ai* whereas they have *ī* from older *ē* in words of this type. Examples are:—M. *deien*, S. *dien dȳen* (late OE. *dēgian*) to *dye*; *eie*, *ȳe* (late OE. *ēge*) *eye*; *fleien*, *flȳen* (late OE. *flēgan*) to *fly*, and similarly *deien*, *dȳen* to *die*; *dreie*, *drȳe tedious*, *dree*; *fleie*, *flȳe fly*; *leien*, *lȳen* to *tell lies*; pret. pl. *seien*, *sȳen they saw*, from which was formed a new sing.

sȳ beside the regular form seih, seiȝ (late OE. seh); teien, tȳen *to tie*; wreien (cp. NE. be-wray), wrȳen *to accuse*. Cp. § 118.

§ 108. In the northern and north Midland dialects the ēȝ in the above and similar forms had come to stand finally through early loss of the following syllable. These dialects accordingly had ēȝ (= ēχ, generally written ēgh), and later ē, as dēgh *to dye*, ēgh *eye*, flēgh *to fly*, later dē, ē, flē which have regularly become dī, ī, flī in the modern dialects of this area. But when the following vowel was preserved these dialects also had ei, like the Midland, as eien eies *eyes*, fleies *he flies*, leies *he tells lies*, &c. And then new formations often took place through levelling out in different directions, as flei formed from fleies, and flēghes formed from flēgh; &c.

§ 109. Medially before consonants and finally late OE. ēh generally became eih, mostly written eigh, in the dialects south of the Humber, and then later igh in some of the southern dialects. When the ei came to stand before vowels through the addition of inflexional endings it became ī. Regular forms were e. g. heigh (mod. n. Midl. dialects ei) *high* beside pl. hīe, and then through levelling out in both directions either the ei- or the ī-form, usually the latter, became generalized, as in Chaucer hīgh hȳ beside heigh, nīgh nȳ beside neigh (mod. n. Midl. dialects nei) *nigh, near*, and similarly slīgh slȳe slȳ beside sleigh (ON. slǽgr), pīgh beside peigh, heighte (mod. n. Midl. dialects eit) beside hȳte hīghte due to the influence of hīgh.

In the northern and some of the north Midland dialects the ēh (generally written ēgh) remained in the above and similar forms, as pēh pēgh (mod. dialects pī) *thigh*.

#### au

§ 110. ME. au, also written aw, was of various origins:—

1. From OE. antevocalic a + w or f (= v), as awel aul

awl (OE. *awul*, *awel*) *awl*, *clawe clau claw* (late OE. *clawu* beside the regular nom. *clēa*), *strau straw*, formed from the OE. inflected forms like gen. *strawes*, and similarly *rau raw*; *hawek* later *hawk* (OE. *hafoc*), *nauger* (OE. *nafogār*) *auger*.

2. From OE. *ā + w* in the dialects north of the Humber, as *blawe blau* (OE. *blāwan*) *to blow*, *snau* (OE. *snāw*) *snow*, *auper* (OE. *āwþer*) *either*, and similarly *crawe crau to crow*, *knawe knau to know*, *saule soul*, *slau slow*. See § 113, 1.

3. From OE. *a + guttural g (= ȝ)*, as *drawen* (OE. *dragan*) *to draw*, pl. *dawes* (OE. *dagas*) beside *daies*, formed from the sing. *dai day*, *hawē* (OE. *hagu*) *haw*, and similarly *lawe*, *mawe stomach*, *sawe a saw*, pp. *slawen* from OE. *slagen* beside *slain* from *slāgen*.

4. From OE. *ā + guttural g (= ȝ)* in the dialects north of the Humber, as *ājen awe* (OE. *āgan*) *to possess*, *awen auen aun* (OE. *āgen*) *own*, *þrawe* (OE. *þrāg*) *space of time*.

5. From Anglian *æ* (§ 43) = WS. *ea* before *h* and *ht*, as *saugh* (Angl. *sæh*, WS. *seah*) *he saw*, *faught* (Angl. *fæht*, WS. *feahrt*) *he fought*, and similarly *aughte eight*, *laughter*, *straught straight*, *straughte he stretched*. But the northern dialects did not develop a glide before *h* and *ht*, as *saȝ sagh*, *aȝte aghte*, *faȝt faght*, *laȝter laghter*, *slaȝter slaghter*.

6. From late OE. *æ* (§ 43), *a*, older *æ*, *ā* before *ht*, as *aught* (OE. *āht*) *ought*, *anything*, *rauȝte raughte* (OE. *ræhte*, *rāhte*) *he reached*, and similarly *tauȝte taughte he taught*, *nauȝt naught naught*, *nothing*.

#### eu

§ 111. From OE. *ē* and *ēa* (§ 63) + *w*, as *slēupe* (OE. *slēawþ*) *sloth*, *dēu dēw* (OE. *dēaw*) *dew*, *fēwe fēu* (OE. *fēawe*) *few*, *hēwen hēu* (OE. *hēawan*) *to hew*, and similarly pret. *rēu*, *schēwen to show*, *hēu hēw custom*. For the falling diphthong in the above and similar words Ken. also

had a rising diphthong, written *yau*, *eau* (*eaw*), as *dyau*, *sseawy to show*, see § 63.

NOTE.—In a few words the OE. *éa* became a rising diphthong *ea* which in ME. became *ā* (later *ō* § 51) by absorption of the first element. This gave rise to double forms like *schōwen* beside *schēwen*.

### eu

§ 112. The chief sources of *eu*, also written *ew*, are: OE. *ēow* (cp. § 65), and the Non-WS. *ēow*, *īow* = WS. *īew* (§ 66). The *eu* became *iu* about 1300 and thus fell together with *iu* from OE. *īw* (§ 116), although the *eu* was mostly retained in writing, but was also sometimes written *iw*, as *briwen*, &c.

1. From OE. *ēow*, as *bṛewen bṛeu* (OE. *brēowan*) *to brew*, and similarly *chēwen chēu to chew*, *rēwen rēu to rue*, *sēwen sēu to sew*, *trēwen to throw*; pret. of the old reduplicated strong verbs (§ 414), as *blēu blēw* (OE. *blēow*) *he blew*, and similarly *grēu*, *kneū*, *þrēu*.

2. From Non-WS. *īo* (*ēo*) + *w* = WS. *īe* + *w*, as *nēwe niwe* (Non-WS. *nīowe*, *nēowe*) *new*, and similarly *clēwe clew*, *hēu hēw hēwe hue*, *rēupe ruth*, *trēwe true*.

3. From OE. *ēow*, as *ēwe* (OE. *eowe*) *ewe*, *strēwen* (OE. *streow(i)an*) *to strew*.

4. From OE. antevocalic *e* + *f* (= *v*), as *ēwte* older *evete* (OE. *efete*) *newt*.

NOTE.—1. In a few words OE. initial *ēow* became a rising diphthong, as *ȝowe* from which the form in most of the modern dialects is descended, beside *ewe*, *ȝou* (OE. acc. *ēow*) *you*, *ȝower* *ȝour* (OE. *ēower*) *your*, and then later the *ȝou* became *ȝū*, although the old spelling was generally preserved.

2. In some words OE. medial *ēow* became a rising diphthong *eōw* which in ME. became *ou* (*ow*) by absorption of the first element. This often gave rise to double forms in ME., as *chēwen* beside *chēwen*, *sēwen* beside *sēwen* *to sew*, and similarly *fōwer* *four*, *rōwen* *to rue*, *trōwen*, *trōpe* *truth*. For the later change of *ou* to *ou*, cp. § 114, 1.

## ou

§ 113. ME. *ou*, also written *ow*, was of various origins:—

1. ME. *ō* + *w* = OE. *ā* + *w* in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), as *blōwen* (OE. *blāwan*) *to blow*, *snōw* (OE. *snāw*) *snow*, *sōwle sōule* (OE. *sāwol*, gen. *sāwle*) *soul*, and similarly *crōwe crow*, *crōwen*, *knōwen*, *mōwen*, *qūper either*, *nqūper neither*, *slōw*, *sōwen*, *prōwen*.

2. From OE. *o* + guttural *g* (= *ȝ*), as *bōue bōwe* (OE. *boga*) *bow*, pp. *flōwen flou(e)n* (OE. *flogen*) *flown*, pl. *trōwes* (OE. *trogas*) *troughs*.

3. From early ME. *ō* + *ȝ* = OE. *ā* + guttural *g* (= *ȝ*) in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51), as *qwen* (OE. *āgan*) *to possess*, *qwen* (OE. adj. *āgen*) *own*, *prōwe* (OE. *prāg*) *time, period*.

4. From OE. *o* + *h* or *ht*, as *trōuȝ trōugh* (OE. *troh*, *trog*) *trough*, *dōuȝter doughter* (OE. *dohtor*) *daughter*, pp. *fōuȝten foughten* (OE. *fohten*) *fought*, and similarly pret. *wrōughte*, pp. *wrought*.

5. From *ōht* which was shortened to *oht* during the OE. period, as *qūȝt qught* (OE. *ōht*, *oht*) *anything*, pret. *brōuȝte*, *brōughte* (OE. *brōhte*, *brohte*) *he brought*, pp. *brōuȝt brought* (OE. *brōht*, *broht*), and similarly *nōught naught*, *sōughte*, *sought*; *pōughte*, *pought*.

NOTE.—ME. *ou* became *au* in Kentish and parts of the North and the north-west Midlands in the fourteenth century, as Ken. *knawe to know*, *zaul soul*, *zawe to sow*; nw. Midlands *bawe bow*, *flawe flown*, *knawe to know*, *sawe to sow*, &c. See § 114, 1.

## ou

§ 114. *ou*, also written *ow*, was of various origins:—

1. From OE. *ō* + *w*, as *blōwen* (OE. *blōwan*) *to bloom*, *blossom*, *flōwen* (OE. *flōwan*) *to flow*, and similarly *glōwen*, *grōwen*, *lōwen to low*, *rōwen*, *stōwe place*. In some dialects, e. g. Chaucer's dialect, the *ou* became *ou* in the early

part of the fourteenth century, and thus fell together with the *ou* in § 113, but they did not fall together in all the dialects as is evidenced by many of the modern dialects which still keep them apart. In the north Midlands, for example, the *ou* has become *ou* (*fiou*, *grou*, &c.), but the *ou* has become *oə*, *ō* (*krōə* *crow*, *nōə* *to know*, &c.) from older *au*, see § 113 and note.

2. From OE. *ō* + final guttural *-h* (= *-x*) and medial guttural *-g-* (= *-ȝ-*), cp. *EOE. Gr.* § 172. It is necessary to distinguish between the final and the medial position, because the development in ME. was not the same in both cases:—

(a) Final *-ōh* regularly became *-ouh* (also written *-ouȝ*, *-ough*) which later became *-ough* as in 1. above, as *bough* (OE. *bōh*) *bough*, *inough* (OE. *genōh*) *enough*, *þough* (ON. *\*þōh*) *though*, and similarly *drough* *he drew*, *lough* *he laughed*, *plough*, *slough* *he slew*, &c.

(b) Medial antevocalic *-ōȝ-* became *ou*, also written *-ow-*, which then became *-ū-*, although the *-ou-*, *-ow-* were retained in writing through the influence of the Anglo-Norman system of orthography (§ 9), as pl. *bowes* (OE. *bōgas*) *boughs*, *drowen* (OE. *drōgon*) *they drew*, and similarly *lowen* *they laughed*, *plowes* *ploughs*, *slowen* *they slew*, &c. Cp. § 120.

(c) Then new uninflected forms were often made by levelling out the *ou* (*ow*) = *ū* of the inflected forms, as *bow* beside *bough*, *drow* beside *drough*, *inow* beside *inough*, *plow* beside *plough*, *slow* beside *slough*, &c.

§ 115. The combinations *-ōh* and *-ōȝ-* had an entirely different development in the dialects north of the Humber. Here as in the paragraph above it is also necessary to distinguish between the final and the medial position:—

(a) Final *-ōh*, generally written *-ōȝ*, *-ōgh*, remained until about the end of the thirteenth century, and then became *-ūgh*, although the old spelling was mostly preserved, see § 55, as *bōgh*, *enōgh*, *plōgh*, *slōgh* *he slew*, &c.

(b) Medial *-ōȝ-* became first of all *ou*, also written *ow*, and

but the fusion of  $\ddot{y} + \mathfrak{z}$  and  $\ddot{u} + \mathfrak{z}$  did not take place until the early ME. period. Examples are:—

1. OE.  $i + \mathfrak{z}$  became  $\bar{i}$ , also written  $\bar{y}$ , as *nīne* (OE. *nigon*) *nine*, *liēst līest* (OE. *ligest*) *thou liest down*, and similarly *stī pig-sty*, *stīle stīle*, *tīle tile*.

2. OE.  $i + \mathfrak{z}$  became  $\bar{i}$ , as *stīen stīen* (OE. *stīgan*) *to ascend*, *wī* (OE. *wīg*) *battle*, and similarly *Fridai Friday*, *hīen hīen* *to hie, hasten*; *twīes* (OE. *twīga* + adverbial gen. ending -es), *Orm twigess twiggess twice*, and similarly *pries thrice*.

3. OE.  $y$  (§ 49) +  $\mathfrak{z}$  became  $\ddot{u}$ ,  $\bar{i}$ , as *lūie, līe, līe* (OE. *lyge*) *a lie*, and similarly *būiest, biest, bīest* *thou buyest*, *rūie, rie, rīe* *rye*.

4. OE.  $\ddot{y}$  (§ 57) +  $\mathfrak{z}$  became  $\ddot{u}$ ,  $\bar{i}$ , as *drūie, drīe, drīe* (OE. *drīge*) *dry*, *būien, bīen* (OE. *bīegan*, later *bīgan*, *bīgan*) *to bend*.

5. OE.  $u + \mathfrak{z}$  became  $\ddot{u}$ , later written *ou*, *ow* (§ 9), as pl. *mouen, mowen* (OE. *\*mugon*) *they may*, *fūel, fou(e)* (OE. *fugol*) *bird, fowl*, and similarly *3ūþ 3ouþ* *youth*, *sow(e)* (OE. *sugu*) *sow*.

6. OE.  $\ddot{u} + \mathfrak{z}$  became  $\ddot{u}$ , later written *ou*, *ow*, as *būen bouen bowen* (OE. *būgan*) *to bend, bow*, *trūen trouen trowen* (OE., Anglian *trūgian*) *to trust*.

#### (8) OTHER DEPENDENT CHANGES.

§ 123. The initial *wur-* in the late OE. combination *wur* + consonant from older *wyr* + consonant (EOE. *Gr.* § 63) was generally written *wor-* in ME., as *worchen*, *wurthen* (early OE. *wyrcean*) *to work*, and similarly *worm*, *wurm*; *worse*, *wurse*; *wort*, *wurt* *root*.

§ 124. The initial combination *wim-* became *wum-* (also written *wom-*) in early ME., as *wum(m)an* (OE. *wimman* older *wifman*) *woman*, although the old writing with *wim-* was often retained.

§ 125. In those parts of the country where OE. *y* remained

in early ME. (§ 49) the *ü* about the beginning of the thirteenth century became *u* (often written *o*, § 9) before *š* (= *sch*), *tš* (= *ch* in *chin*), *ltš*, *ntš*, and *dž* (= the *j* in *just*), as *bluschen* (OE. *blyscan*) *to blush*, *crucche* (OE. *crycc*) *crutch*, *muchel* later *much(e)* (OE. *mycel*) *much*, *unche* beside *inche* (OE. *ynce*) *inch*, *cuggel* (OE. *cycgel*) *cudgel*, and similarly *rusche*, *prusche*, *wusch* *wish*; *clucchen*, *kuchen* *kitchen*, *swuche* later *suche*, *wuch* *which*; *brugge* *bridge*, *rugge* *ridge*.

§ 126. The *ü* in the above area also became *u* in the neighbourhood of consonants which favoured rounding, viz. after labials and *sch*, before *r* and especially between such sounds as *burpen* *burden* (OE. *byrpen*) *burden*, *churche* (OE. *cyrice*, *cirice*) *church*, *gurdel* (OE. *gyrdel*) *girdle*, *schuttel* (OE. *scytel*) *shuttle*, and similarly *churn*, *hurdel*, *hurst* *copse*, *schutten*, &c., see LUTCK, *Hist. Gr.* § 397.

§ 127. Before and after certain consonants *e* became *i* in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in the North and some parts of the Midlands, especially the east and south-east Midlands, as *bripen* (mod. dialects *briðə(r)z*) beside *brepen*, and similarly *brist* *breast*, *bristen* *to burst*, *rist* (mod. dialects *rist*, *rust*) *rest*, *togidre* *together*.

§ 128. Postconsonantal *wō* from OE. *wā* (§ 51) became *wō* in a great part of the Midlands in the thirteenth century, as *two* (OE. *twā*) *two*, *who* (OE. *hwā*) *who*.

§ 129. ME. *e*, of whatever origin, became *a* before *r* belonging to the same syllable in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, although the *e* was very often retained in writing, as *marre* (OE. *merran*) *to mar*, *starre* (ON. *sterta*) *to start*, and similarly *harvest*, *yard rod*, *stuff*; *farre* older *ferre* (OE. *feorr*) *far*, and similarly *dark*, *harte* *heart*, *starre* *star*, *starve* *to die*; *darling* (early OE. *dēorling*, later *deorling*), and similarly *farping*, *starbord*; *parson* (OFr. *persone*) *person*, *parson*, and similarly *sarve* *to serve*, *sarvise*, *warre* *war*, &c.



§ 130. *ri* in the combination consonant + *ri* + dental became *ir* (*ur*) in the early part of the fifteenth century, as *bird* *burd* beside older *brid* *bird*, *birne* *to burn*, *birste* *to burst*, beside *burne*, *burste*, *Cursmas* (mod. n. dialects *kāsmās*) beside older *Cristes messe* *Christmas*, *dirt durt*, older *drit*, *pirde purde*, older *pridde* (OE. *pridda*) *third*.

§ 131. During the ME. period *i* was probably lowered in closed syllables, especially before and after labials, liquids, and nasals, to a mid-mixed-narrow vowel like the *e* in German *gabe*. It was often written *e*, especially in the Midland and northern dialects, and in some dialects it became a full mid-front-wide vowel like the *e* in standard NE. *set*, as is shown by its development in the modern dialects, e. g. in the south of Scotland, n.Nhb., n.Cum., Dor. and w.Som., see *ED. Gr.* § 68. Examples are: *bigenne(n)* *to begin*, *fenger*, *leppis* *lips*, *reng* *ring*, *sweftli*, *wekked* *wicked*, *welle* *will*, *wemmen* *women*. What is written *i* often rhymes with *e* from the thirteenth century onwards, as *childre* : *eldre*, *stille* : *telle*, &c.

§ 132. *e* became *i* during the ME. period before *nk*, *ng*, palatal *ng* (= *ndž*) and *ntš*, as *pinken* (OE. *þencan*) *to think*, *flingen* (ON. *flengja*) *to fling*, *inglisch* (OE. *englisc*) *English*, *singen* (OE. *sengan*) *to singe*, *drinchen* beside *drenchen* (OE. *drenčan*) *to drown*, and similarly *link*, *winge* (ON. *vāngr*) *wing*.

§ 133. The *o* which arose from older *ō* before *ng* (§ 74) became *u* (generally written *o*, § 9) during the ME. period in the west Midland dialects, and the *u*-sound or its further development has been regularly preserved in the modern dialects of this area, and has even spread to other areas, see *ED. Gr.* § 32. Examples are: *amonge*, *long*, *mongere* *merchant*, *song*, *strong*, *tonge* *a pair of tongs*, *þrong*, *wrong*, of which *amonge* and *mongere* have crept into standard NE.

## CHAPTER IV

THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. VOWELS  
OF UNACCENTED SYLLABLES

## 1. THE WEAKENING OF VOWELS IN UNACCENTED SYLLABLES.

§ 134. One of the characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the weakening of the OE. vowels to *e* in unaccented syllables, and its eventual disappearance in most cases. The weakening of *a*, *o*, *u* to *e* had begun to take place in late OE., and final *i* had already become *-e* in the seventh century. It is impossible to determine what was the precise quality of this *e*. In final syllables it must have been a kind of *ə*-sound and have varied in quality according to the nature of the surrounding sounds something like the *a* in standard NE. *china*, *cathedral*. This no doubt accounts for its being sometimes written *i*, *u*. These variations in writing were common from the end of the thirteenth century; the *u* was especially common in the north-west Midland dialects and the *i* in the northern dialects. Examples in final syllables are:—

(a) When final, as *sōne* (OE. *sōna*) *soon*, *eiȝte* (OE. *eahta*) *eight*, nom. sing. of masc. *n*-stems, as *dogge* (OE. *dogga*) *dog*, the ending of the gen. pl. of nouns and adjectives, as *stōne* (OE. *stāna*), *gōdre* (OE. *gōdra*), the comparative of adjectives, as *gretter(e)* (OE. *grīetra*) *greater*, dat. sing. of *u*-stems, as *sune* (OE. *sunā*). Nom. sing. of *wa*-, *wō*-stems, as *bāle* (OE. *bealu*, *-o*) *evil*, *schāde* (OE. *sceadu*, *-o*) *shadow*, nom. sing. of short *ō*-stems, as *tāle* (OE. *talū*) *tale*, *number*, nom. acc. sing. of short *u*-stems, as *sune sone* (OE. *sunu*) *son*; OE. *gearu*, *-o*

*ready*, pl. *gearwe* regularly became *zare*, *zarwe*, and then from the latter was formed a new singular *zaru*, and similarly *buru* *burrow*, *holu* *hollow*, *naru* *narrow*, *schadu* *shadow*, *soru* *sorrow*, &c., see § 241. Nom. sing. of masc. *a*-stems, as *ende* (OE. *ende*), nom. acc. sing. of short *i*-stems, as *dēne* *valley*, *spēre* *spear*, (OE. *dene*, *spere*), nom. sing. of fem. *n*-stems, as *tunge* (OE. *tunge*) *tongue*, nom. acc. pl. of strong adjectives, as *blīnde* (OE. *blinde*), &c.

(b) In final syllables ending in a consonant, as nom. acc. pl. of masc. *a*-stems, as *stōnes* (OE. *stānas*), acc. gen. dat. sing. and nom. acc. pl. of masc. and fem. *n*-stems, as *doggen* (OE. *doggan*), *tungen* (OE. *tungan*), the inf. of strong and weak verbs, as *helpen*, *dēlen*, *māken* (OE. *helpan*, *dāelan*, *macian*), ending of the second and third pers. sing. of the present of the second class of weak verbs, as *mākest*, *mākeþ* (OE. *macast*, *macaþ*), the ending of the pres. plural of strong and weak verbs, as *helpeþ*, *mākeþ* (OE. *helpaþ*, *maciaþ*). *hēved* later *hēd* (OE. *hēafod*) *head*, *sadel* (OE. *sadol*), *brōþer*, *mōder* (OE. *brōþor*, *mōdor*), superlative of adjectives *gladest* (OE. *gladost*), pp. of the second class of weak verbs, as *māked* (OE. *macod*) *made*, the pret. pl. of strong and weak verbs, as *bounden*, *mākeden* (OE. *bundun*, *-on*, *macodun*, *-on*), the dat. pl. of nouns and adjectives, *stōnen*, *tungen*, *blīnden* (early OE. *stānum*, *tungum*, *blindum*, late OE. *-un*, *-on*, *an*), here the ending *-en* mostly disappeared in early ME.

From the examples given in (a) and (b) it will be seen that the OE. stem-formative or inflexional endings *-a*, *-an*, *-as*, *-ast*, *aþ*; *-ol*, *-on*, *-or*, *-ost*; *-u*, *-um*, *-un* all became in ME. *-e*, *-en*, *-es*, *-est*, *-eþ*; *-el*, *-en*, *-er*, *-est*; *-e*, *-en*.

(c) In medial syllables, as gen. sing. *hevenes* (OE. *heofones*), pret. sing. *māked(e)*, pl. *māked(en)* (OE. *macode*, *macodun*, *-on*), &c.

## 2. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ME. SVARABHAKTI VOWELS IN FINAL SYLLABLES.

§ 135. In late OE. or early ME. the vocalic nasals and *l* developed an *e* before them and then became consonantal, as *bōsem* (OE. *bōsm*) *bosom*, *hasel* (OE. *hæsl*) *hazel shrub*, *sweven* (OE. *swefn*) *dream*, and similarly *blossem*, *botem*, *hūsel* *Eucharist*, *setel* *seat*, *tōken* *token*, &c.

§ 136. Final *-els* became *-eles*, as *birieles* *berieles* *būrieles* (OE. *byrgels*) *tomb*, and similarly *rēcheles* *rēkeles* *incense*, *rēdeles* *rēdeles* *riddle*, &c.

§ 137. In late OE. and early ME. a vowel was developed between *r* and a following guttural spirant, as ME. nom. sing. *buruȝ* (OE. *burug*, *buruh* beside *burg*, *burh*), inflected form *burȝwe* (with *w* from older *ȝ*, § 105), from which a new nom. sing. *burȝugh* was formed, and similarly *furȝugh*, *holȝugh* *hollow*, *marȝugh* *marrow*, &c., cp. *EOF. Gr.* § 102.

## 3. THE WEAKENING OF VOWELS IN SYLLABLES WITH A SECONDARY ACCENT.

§ 138. The vowel in suffixal and derivative syllables was generally weakened to *e* just as in the inflexional syllables, but in some suffixal and derivative syllables which had a secondary accent the vowel was not weakened to *e*. This was especially the case with derivatives in *-dōm*, *-ēr(e)* (denoting *nomina agentis*), *-fast*, *-fōld* (*-fāld*), *-ful*, *-hōde* (*-hēde*), *-i* (older *-ī* = OE. *-ig*), *-ing*, *-isch*, *-lēš* (OE. *-lēas*), *-līche*, *-ling*, *-lok* (OE. *-lāc*), *-schipe*, *-sum*, *-ung*, and *-ward*. The long vowels in the above were shortened during the ME. period. Examples are:—

*kinedōm*, *wisdōm*; *bākēre* (OE. *bæcēre*), *drinkēr(e)* (OE. *drincēre*); *stēdefast* (OE. *stedefæst*); Orm. *ānfāld* (OE. *ānfeald*); *pankful* (OE. *pancfull*); *childhōde*, *-hēde*

(OE. *cildhād*); *bodi*, *hōli hāli* (OE. *bodig*, *hālig*), *hēring* (OE. *hēring*) *herring*, *englisch* (OE. *englisc*), *faderlēš*, *hōmlēš* (OE. *fæderlēas*, *hāmlēas*); *hevenlīch(e)* (OE. *heofonlic*) *heavenly*; *schilling* (OE. *scilling*); *wedlōk* (OE. *wedlāc*); *frendschipe* (OE. *frēondscipe*); *langsum longsum* (OE. *langsum*) *tedious*; *chēpung* (OE. *cēapung*) *trading*; *afterward* (OE. *æfterward*).

The OE. ending *-ende* of the present participle became *-and(e)* in the North, *-end(e)* in the Midlands, and *-ind(e)* in the South, as *helpand(e)*, *helpend(e)*, *helpind(e)* *helping*.

#### 4. THE LOSS OF FINAL -e.

§ 139. The loss of final *-e* took place at various periods and under various conditions, e.g. it ceased to be pronounced much earlier in the North than in the South, and much earlier in unaccented than in accented words, but it is only possible to fix approximate dates for its loss. This is in a great measure due to the laxity in the metrical construction of much of the ME. poetry and to the great conservatism exhibited by some of the best poets. The importance attached to metre and rhyme is sometimes exaggerated. What the student of the English language wants to know is not so much what poets like Orm, Chaucer, Barbour, &c. wrote in their metre, as how they actually pronounced their words in speaking. Good metre is always a valuable auxiliary aid in helping to confirm results which have been arrived at by other means, but when it is used as the chief or sole means for arriving at results, we are merely making use of what might be called letter-language instead of spoken language.

§ 140. In treating the history of final *-e* in ME. it is important to remember that a large number of ME. words have a final *-e* which did not belong to such words in OE., the *e* of the inflected forms having been levelled out into the uninflected forms, as *bāre* (OE. *bær*, pl. *bare*), *bride* (OE.

brȳd), chēpe (OE. cēap), cōle (OE. col, gen. coles), lōre (OE. lār), nēdle nēdle (OE. nǣdl, nēdl), sēke (OE. sēoc) *sick*, tīde (OE. tīd), &c., see § 103. This final -e had the same further development in ME. as in words with final -e from OE. -a, -e, -o, -u.

§ 141. The final -e disappeared or rather ceased to be pronounced earlier in dissyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable than in those with a long stem-syllable, as in *bite* (OE. bite) *bite*, *bit*, *sun* (OE. sunu), beside *nēdle* *nēdle*, *tide*. In both categories of words the -e continued to be written long after it had ceased to be pronounced. In late ME. the -e in dissyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable was generally omitted in writing, as in *bit*, *son*, but in dissyllabic forms with a long stem-syllable it was generally retained in writing to indicate that the preceding vowel was long. It ceased to be pronounced earliest in the Scottish and northern dialects, later in the Midland dialects, and latest of all in the southern dialects, especially the Kentish dialect. In all the dialects it disappeared in pronunciation earlier in nouns and verbs than in adjectives, and earlier in the strong than in the weak declension of adjectives.

In the Scottish and northern dialects it had ceased to be pronounced in all forms by about the middle of the thirteenth century.

In the Midland dialects it had ceased to be pronounced in all forms by about the middle of the fourteenth century, but the loss of final -e in pronunciation began in some parts of this large area at a much earlier date. Already in the *Ormulum* (about 1200) it was often unpronounced when the next word in the same sentence began with a vowel, in the dat. sing. of strong nouns and adjectives, and in the imperative singular of verbs. In the poetry of the fourteenth century it had become optional to retain or omit the final -e in most forms. But the full process of its loss in pronun-

ciation was not completed until about one hundred years later than in the Scottish and northern dialects.

As Chaucer (1340-1400) is by far the most important ME. poet it will be useful to give here a brief summary of his retention and omission of the final *-e*. It should, however, be remembered that he was a very conservative poet, and that consequently his metrical forms are no sure guarantee of how he actually pronounced such forms in his spoken language. In his poetry the final *-e* was generally pronounced in dissyllabic forms with a long stem-syllable at the end of the line, but was often not pronounced in other positions. It was not pronounced in the following categories of forms:—In the pp. of strong verbs when the final *-n* had disappeared, as *come*, *drive*, *stōle*; in the second pers. sing. of the preterite of strong verbs, as *bēre*, *tōke*, &c.; in nouns with a short stem-syllable, as *son*, *wone* *custom*, and also in the dat. singular of such nouns. It was generally pronounced in the following categories:—In the plural of attributive adjectives, and in the infinitive of verbs, as *bēre*, *māke*. It was sometimes pronounced and sometimes omitted in the following categories:—It was often omitted in the present indicative and the imperative, more seldom in the present subjunctive, and sometimes in the syncopated forms of the singular and plural of the preterite of weak verbs. It was omitted in nouns with a short stem-syllable, but rarely in nouns with a long stem-syllable. In the dat. singular of nouns ending in a consonant it was generally omitted in pronunciation. It was often unpronounced in the singular of the weak declension of adjectives.

In the southern dialects the final *-e* ceased to be pronounced in all forms in the second half of the fourteenth century.

§ 142. The loss of final *-e* in trisyllabic forms can only be partially treated here as we shall have to return to it when dealing with *-e* in medial syllables (§§ 153-4). It began to disappear in early ME. when the first syllable was long and

the second syllable had a secondary accent, but the secondary accent in the second syllable remained longer in some types of words than in others, and in poetry the final -e often continued to be pronounced until the fifteenth century, whence such double forms as *frendschi<sup>e</sup>*, *heizliche* *highly*, *siknesse*, pl. *wurpie* *worthy*, beside *frendschip*, *heizlich*, *sikness*, *wurpi*. This explains why the final -e disappeared so early in the inflected forms of dissyllabic adjectives, as pl. *lēred* *learned*, *wurpi*. The -e regularly remained in early ME. in verbs of the type *lovēde* (OE. *lufode*), cp. § 153, but in verbs of the type *mākede* (OE. *macode*) it only remained for a time through the influence of dissyllabic preterites like *dēmde* (OE. *dēmdē*) *he judged*, *hērde* (OE. *hīerde*, *hērde*) *he heard*, cp. § 153.

#### 5. THE LOSS OF e IN FINAL SYLLABLES ENDING IN A CONSONANT.

§ 143. Endings like -es, -ed were in some dialects written -is (-ys), -id (-yd), -us, -ud, see § 134, and Chaucer sometimes used these i-endings for the sake of rhyme.

§ 144. e disappeared in early ME. between a diphthong and a following liquid or nasal, as *drawn* beside older *drawen*, *drazen* (OE. *dragen*) *drawn*, *fain* (OE. *fægen*) *joyful*, *fair* (OE. *fæger*) *beautiful*, *seil* (OE. *segel*, *segl*) *sail*, and similarly *hail*, *four* *four*, pp. *lein* *lain*, *leir* *lair*, *main* *power*, *awn* *own*, *rein* *rain*, pp. *slein* *slain*, *tail*, *wain* *wagon*.

§ 145. e also disappeared in early ME. in the combination vowel + e + consonant, as *foul* from older *fuwel* *fuzel* (OE. *fugol*) *bird*, *fowl* (§ 122), *twis* *twice*, *pris* *thrice*, beside older *twies*, *pries*.

§ 146. -es. This ending occurs in the gen. sing. of the strong declension of nouns and adjectives and in the plural of nouns except the weak declension, in adverbial genitives, in the second and third pers. singular and the plural of the



present in the northern dialects. In the northern and north Midland dialects the *e* began to be syncopated in the early part of the fourteenth century and this process was completely carried out by the end of the century, as *dai(e)s*, *wai(e)s*, *clāp(e)s*; adv. *ell(e)s* *else*; verbs, as *cum(e)s* *com(e)s*, *bēr(e)s*, &c. When unsyncopated forms are found after the above date in monuments belonging to the Scottish and northern dialects, they are due to the imitation of Chaucerian forms. The syncope in nouns and adjectives took place much later in the Midland and southern dialects.

§ 147. **-en.** This ending occurs in the weak declension of nouns and adjectives, in the infinitive, in the past participle of strong verbs, in the present plural of the subjunctive, in the preterite plural of strong and weak verbs, and in the Midland dialects in the present plural of the indicative. The final **-n** in some of these categories disappeared during the OE. period in the northern dialects. The final **-n** also generally disappeared early in the southern dialects. After the loss of the final **-n** the *e* also gradually disappeared. When preceded by a diphthong the *e* was regularly syncopated in the infinitive, as *lein leyn* *to lay*, *sein seyn* *to say*. It was also syncopated between *r-n*, and *l-n* in the past participle of strong verbs, as *bōrn*, *tōrn*, *stōln*, and also between a diphthong and the *n*, as pp. *slain* *slayn* (OE. *slægen*) *slain*, see § 144.

§ 148. **-er.** This ending chiefly occurs in the comparative of adjectives. The OE. ending was **-ra**. In passing from OE. to ME. the glide vowel *e* was developed between a preceding consonant and the *r* which gave in early ME. the ending **-ere**. And then the final **-e** disappeared, whence the ordinary ME. ending **-er**, as OE. *grīetra* = ME. *gretter*, OE. *brādra* = ME. *brāder* *brōder*; and similarly with the ending of the gen. plural of strong adjectives (OE. **-ra**), cp. Chaucer *oure aller cok*, *alderbest*, *alderfirst*.

§ 149. *-est*. This ending occurs chiefly in the superlative of adjectives, and corresponds to the OE. ending *-est(a)*, *-ost(a)*. In ME. the *-e-* was never syncopeated.

§ 150. *-est, -ep*. These endings occur in the second and third pers. sing. of the present indicative, for the plural ending *-ep*, see below. Here a distinction must be made between the different dialects. In the OE. period syncope was general in the strong verbs in WS. and Kentish, but in the Anglian dialects the forms without syncope were almost entirely generalized. This distinction was also preserved in the ME. period, that is, syncope regularly took place in the southern dialects, but generally not in the Midland dialects, and not at all in the northern dialects. In the Midland dialects syncope was far more common after long than after short stems. Chaucer has double forms in the third pers. singular, as *comþ*, *mākþ*, *loveþ*, beside *comeþ*, *mākeþ*, *loveþ*. Syncope did not take place in any of the dialects in the second pers. sing. of the second class of weak verbs, as *lovest*, *lōkest*, OE. *lufast*, *lōcast*. The *e* in the ending *-ep* of the plural of the present indicative was never syncopeated in the southern dialects.

§ 151. *-ed*. This ending of the pp. of weak verbs corresponds to the OE. endings *-ed*, *-od*. The *-ed* regularly remained in ME., but there are many new formations which were formed direct from the ME. preterite. Regular forms were: *māked* (OE. *macod*), *kīped* (OE. *cȳped*) *made known*, *wēred* (OE. *wered*) *defended*, &c. New formations were: *hērd* (OE. *hiered*, *hēred*) : *hērd*, *maad* : *māde*, beside the regular form *māked*, *clept* : *clepte*, beside the regular form *clēped*.

## 6. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ME. SVARABHAKTI VOWELS IN MEDIAL SYLLABLES.

§ 152. Many words which were dissyllabic in OE. became trisyllabic in ME. through the development of a glide

vowel between a consonant and a following liquid, nasal or w:—

1. An *e* was developed about 1200 in the combination open voiced consonant + a liquid or nasal in dissyllabic forms with shortening of a preceding long vowel, as *breþeren* beside older *brēþren*, pl. *develes* beside older *dēvles*, *evere* (OE. *ǣfre*) *ever*, *slumeren* to *slumber*.

2. An *o* was developed between a liquid and a following w from older *ɜ* (§ 298), as *borowen* beside older *borȝen* (OE. *borgian*) to *borrow*, and similarly *folowen*, *halowen* to *hallow*, *morowe* *morrow*.

#### 7. THE LOSS OR RETENTION OF MEDIAL AND FINAL *e* IN TRISYLLABIC FORMS.

§ 153. It is necessary to distinguish between trisyllabic forms with a short stem-syllable and those with a long stem-syllable. When the stem-syllable was short the medial *e* regularly disappeared, and when it was long the final *e* disappeared. This loss of the medial or final *e* began to take place in early ME. Examples with short stem-syllables are: *panne þonne* (OE. *panone*) *thence*, pl. *fadres* (OE. *fæderas*), gen. and dat. sing. *watres*, *watre* (OE. *wāteres*, *wātere*), pl. *develes*, *heveþes*, pl. *munkes* *monkes* (OE. *muncas*) from which was formed a new singular *munk* *monk*, and similarly *hemp*, *mint* *coin*, &c. The forms with syncope are very common in the *Ormulum*, as pl. *effne* beside sing. *efenn*, *gaddrenn*, *nipprenn* to *humble*, *oppnenn*, *wattrenn*, gen. *werrldess* beside nom. *werelld* *world*, but even in the *Ormulum* we occasionally find new formations, especially in the preterite of weak verbs, as *lufede*, *oppnede*, &c.; in fact forms of the type *lufde* were rare in ME., because the medial *e* was mostly preserved through the influence of the *e* in the past participle. It should be noted that the medial *e* in preterites like *haveþe* (OE. *hæfde*), *liveþe* (OE. *lifde*) was

never pronounced in the spoken language. Examples with long stem-syllable are: pl. **helpers**, **maiden(s)** beside the new formation **maidnes**, pret. **māked** (OE. **macode**), **lōked** (OE. **lōcode**), but preterites of the type **lōked**, **māked** preserved the final -e for a time through the influence of dissyllabic preterites like **dēmde**, **hērde**, cp. § 142. During the ME. period the above sound-laws became to some extent obliterated through analogical formations in both directions. In the northern dialects the loss of the final -e in forms with a short stem-syllable became more general. In the southern dialects the loss of the medial e in forms with a long stem-syllable became more general. In Chaucer double forms are sometimes found side by side, as **wēreðe** beside **wēred**, **clepte** beside **clēped**. The trisyllabic forms are very rare in late ME. poetry.

§ 154. In trisyllabic forms containing a secondary accented syllable it is necessary to distinguish whether the secondary accent was on the second or on the third syllable. When it was on the second the final -e regularly disappeared, but when it was on the third the medial e disappeared. Examples of the former are: *Ormulum* **allmess** (OE. **ælmesse**) *alms*, **laffdiȝ** (OE. **hlǣfdige**) *lady*, **frendschip**, **heȝlich**, **sikness**, beside older **frendschipe**, &c., see § 142. This explains why adjectives like **englisch**, **hōli**, **riȝtfull**, **wurpi**, &c., superlatives like **fairest**, **hardest**, derivatives in **-ung**, **-ing**, &c., remained uninflected in the oblique cases. Examples of the latter are: **Frīdai** (OE. **Frīgedæg**), **kindom** (OE. **cynedōm**), **neighbour** older **nehhebour** (OE. **nēahgebūr**), **quinstrē** beside older **quinestrē** *quince-tree*. This syncope of medial e is not common in early ME., and in the *Ormulum* it does not take place at all, but at a later date numerous analogical formations are found.

### 8. THE TREATMENT OF UNACCENTED *e* IN POLYSYLLABIC FORMS.

§ 155. In forms of the type  $\acute{x}\acute{x}\acute{x}$  the medial *e* disappeared in the first instance and then with the loss of the secondary accent in the third syllable the final *-e* also disappeared, as *mínchène* (OE. *mynecenu*), later *mínchen nun*, *hérbèrwe* (OE. *hereberge*) later *hérber harbour*, *inn*, *wébstère* (OE. *webbestre*) with *-è-* due to the influence of *webbere*, later *wébster female weaver*, and similarly *bakster*, *dáisi(e) daisy*, *minter*, *sempster*, &c. Preterites like *gaderede*, *scaterede* and those of the type *ánswèrède*, *witnèssède* preserved the stronger secondary accent and had the endings *-ede*, *-ed*, *-de* apparently used indiscriminately.

### 9. THE TREATMENT OF VOWELS IN PREFIXES.

§ 156. In the treatment of prefixes it is necessary to distinguish between original nouns and adjectives on the one hand, and verbs on the other. In OE. as in the other Old Germanic languages original nouns and adjectives containing a prefix had the principal accent on the prefix. This rule was preserved in ME. and accordingly the prefixes generally underwent no change, *cp. after-ward* (OE. *æfter-weard*), *unfair* (OE. *unfæger*), &c. On the other hand in OE. as in the other old Germanic languages verbs containing an inseparable prefix had the principal accent on the verbal element. This rule was also preserved in ME. with the result that prefixes containing a long vowel in OE. were shortened in ME., as *abíden*, *arísen* = OE. *ābīdan*, *ārīsan*, *to-brēken* = OE. *tō-brecan* *to break to pieces*. With the exception of OE. *æt-*, *be-*, *ge-*, *of-*, *on-*, *ond-*, the prefixes containing a short vowel generally underwent no change in ME., as *forbēren* (OE. *forberan*) *to forbear*, *fulfillen* (OE. *fulfyllan*) *to fulfil*, *misliken* (OE. *mislician*) *to displease*.

æt- became at-, as athālden, -hōlden *to withhold*. be- became bi-, as bicumen (OE. *becuman*), bihāten (OE. *behātan*) *to promise*. ge- became i- (also written y-) through the intermediate stages zi-, ī-, as iholpen (OE. *geholpen*), inough (OE. *genōg, genōh*) *enough*, iwis (OE. *gewiss*) *certain*. of-, on-, ond- became a-, as adoun (OE. *ofdūne*) *down*, apirst (OE. *ofpyrst*) *thirsty*, abouten (OE. *onbūtan*) *about*, along (OE. *ondlong, andlang*) *along*.

#### 10. THE TREATMENT OF UNACCENTED WORDS.

§ 157. This subject has been partly dealt with under the shortening of long vowels, see § 101, and we shall have to return to it when dealing with the pronouns and auxiliary verbs. By referring to Chapter XI of the *EOE. Gr.* it will be seen that many of the pronouns had double forms in OE., and similarly in ME. we also have accented beside unaccented forms, as wē, ūs, nāt, nōt beside nauȝt, nouȝt, ān, ā beside ān, ȝn. Final -e disappeared in early ME. in unaccented forms, as ȝes *yes*, sōn *soon*, þan (þen), whan (when), &c., beside the accented forms ȝese, sōne, þanne (penne), whanne (whenne), &c.; in the inflected forms of words like ān, mīn, þīn, &c., and also between l or n, and s in final syllables, as els *else*, hens *hence*, sins *since*, whens *whence*, beside older elles, hennes, sinnes (sipnes), whennes. The -e in the def. article often disappeared when the next word began with a vowel, as pende *the end*, pōpre *the other*. This elision of the e has become generalized both before vowels and consonants in all the modern English dialects from Northumberland to Nottinghamshire, that is, it has become þ (never ð) or t, see *ED. Gr.* § 312.

## CHAPTER V

THE SCANDINAVIAN AND FRENCH  
ELEMENTS IN ME.

## 1. THE SCANDINAVIAN ELEMENT IN ME.

§ 158. This is a wide and important subject and at the same time a difficult subject, because of the very large number of words which were entirely alike or nearly alike in the Old English and Old Scandinavian languages. And we should now be unable to tell from which language they came if we had no English records before the invasions of the Scandinavians took place. The consequence was that an Englishman in those days would have no greater difficulty in understanding a Viking than a Yorkshire dialect speaker would have in understanding a Somersetshire peasant of to-day. And we even possess historical evidence that the old Scandinavians looked upon the English language as one with their own. In Chapter VII of the *Saga of Gunnlaugr Ormstunga* it is stated that there was at that time (eleventh century) 'the same tongue in England as in Norway and Denmark'.

§ 159. The Scandinavian loan-words found their way into English in different strata and at different periods, which in some measure accounts for the same word appearing in various forms in ME., as *laus*, *lous*, *lōs loose*, *naut*, *nōut cattle*, &c. These periods may be conveniently divided into:—

1. From 787 to about 860. During this period the invaders merely made raids for the sake of plunder, and no loan-words worth mentioning came into the language.

2. From 860 to about 990. During this period a very large number of Scandinavians settled permanently in this country, and the foreign idiom was spoken over large tracts of the country.

3. From about 990 to 1016. This was a period of political conquest and of the importation of large numbers of loan-words into the language.

4. From 1013 to 1042 England was entirely under Danish rule. During this period English was spoken at Court, and by this time the foreign idiom had practically ceased to be spoken. An important factor which helped to bring about the complete fusion of the Scandinavian settlers and the English was the Norman Conquest in 1066, when both the Scandinavians and the English combined together to combat the invader.

5. From 1050 to 1150, when the English and Scandinavian peoples were completely merged together. This was the last and most important period of influx, and a very large number of loan-words found their way into the language during these years.

§ 160. The area over which the loan-words extended in OE. and ME. and still extends in the modern dialects was the northern, the north and east Midland counties down to East Anglia, and the north-western counties. The great bulk of the loan-words must have come into the language in the course of the tenth and especially the eleventh century, but they do not appear in great numbers in the literature until the ME. period. This was due to the fact that literature in late OE. was mainly written in the WS. dialect. We know that the Scandinavian influence was least of all in the southern and south-western dialects, hence naturally very few loan-words would be found in the WS. dialect of the OE. period. Thus in *Lazamon's Brut* (about 1205), the language of which keeps up much of the traditions of the WS. literature, there are very few Scandinavian words, while in the east Midland *Ormulum* (about 1200) the Scandinavian element is considerable, viz. about 250 such words.

§ 161. The number of Scandinavian loan-words in ME. must have been very much greater than what appears in



ME. literature. This is proved by the fact that the modern dialects contain thousands of such words including all parts of speech. In this connexion we will only mention one important piece of evidence showing how great the Scandinavian element is in the modern dialects. In the modern dialects OE. initial *sc-* (= *sk-*) has become *sh-* in native words just as in the standard language, as *shade, ship*, &c., whereas in words of foreign origin it has remained in the dialects just as in the standard language, as *scaffold, school, sky*, &c. Now if we exclude all *sc-* words of various origins which are common to the standard language and the dialects, it is a remarkable fact that the *English Dialect Dictionary* contains 1,154 simple words beginning with *sc-*.

§ 162. In this connexion it is important to remember that the dialects spoken by the Scandinavian settlers had for a time a life of their own side by side with the English dialects, whilst the Scandinavians were still regarded by the English as foreigners. During this period of the existence of Scandinavian dialects spoken on English soil, owing to the intercourse between the two nations, fresh loan-words were being continually introduced into English, and then in the course of time the two languages gradually became merged into one which was chiefly English in form, but very rich in Scandinavian words. This process was in a great measure brought about by intermarriage between Scandinavian and English families. That this was so is clearly seen by the large number of proper names of persons of Scandinavian origin which are found in late OE. and early ME. charters and documents, and by the large number of double forms with practically the same meaning, the one being Scandinavian and the other native English, as *aȝe* (*awe*) : *eie* *fear*, *deilen* : *dēlen* *to divide*, *egg* : *eie* (pl. *eyren*) *egg*, *frā* (*frō*) : *fram* *from*, *garȝ* : *ȝard* *yard, garden*, *grā* : OE. *græg*, ME. *grei* *grey*, *gayt* : *gāt*, *gōt* *goat*, *heil* : OE. *hāl*, ME. *hāl*, *hōl* *sound, whole*, *lagu* : OE. *lāw*, *lāten*, *lōten* : *lēten*, *lēten*

(OE. *lātan*, *lētan*) to let, *lȝupen* : OE. *hlēapan* to leap, laus (*lȝus*) : OE. *lēas* false, loose, *naut* (*nȝut*) : OE. *nēat* cattle, *scateren* : *schatern*, *skiften* : *schiften*, *sister* : *suster* (OE. *sweostor*), *swein* : *swān* (*swōn*) servant, NE. sky : heaven, *trigg* : OE. *trēowe* fidelity, *þei* : *þā* those, *weik* : OE. *wāc* weak, *werre* : worse, *ēpen* : OE. *wēpan* to cry, &c.

§ 163. With these few preliminary remarks we shall now proceed to state the more important phonological criteria by which the Scandinavian element in ME. can easily be recognized, and shall, as a rule, only give such illustrative examples as are to be found in well-known ME. texts, such as the *Cursor Mundi* (1300), Richard Rolle de Hampole's *Pricke of Conscience* (about 1349), Barbour's *Bruce* (1375), the *Ormulum* (1200), *Genesis and Exodus* (about 1250), the *Lay of Havelok the Dane* (1300), Robert of Brunne's *Handlyng Synne* (1300-30), *Early English Alliterative Poems* (about 1350), &c. And it should be noted that the Scandinavian loan-words which came into ME. underwent all further sound-changes in common with the native words containing the same sounds. As Old Icelandic is the best representative of the Old Scandinavian languages the older illustrative examples are here taken from that language. When the OE. or ME. word comes first in the comparisons given in the following paragraphs, it means that the word is of native origin, but of Scandinavian origin when the O.Icel. word comes first.

§ 164. When a Scandinavian loan-word contained a short stem-vowel at the time it was borrowed we have no means of determining from the vowel alone whether the word was of Scandinavian or English origin, that is, the vowel fell together in sound with the corresponding OE. or early ME. vowel, as OE. *eall*, ME. *al(l)* = O.Icel. *all-r all*; OE. *dragan* = O.Icel. *draga* to draw, OE. *sealt*, ME. *salt* = O.Icel. *salt*, O.Icel. *taka* = OE. *tacan*, ME. *taken*, later *tāken*. O.Icel. *fela* = ME. *felen*, later *fēlen* to conceal, O.Icel. *geta* = ME.

gǣten beside the native form ȝǣten *to get*, O.Icel. hnefi = ME. neve, later nēve *fist*, O.Icel. ketel = OE. cietel, ME. ketel, OE. sendan = O.Icel. senda *to send*. O.Icel. skinn = OE. scinn, ME. skin, O.Icel. hitta = ME. hitten *to hit*. O.Icel. oddi = ME. odde *odd*, OE. open, ME. open, later ȝopen = O.Icel. opinn, O.Icel. rottinn = ME. roten *rotten*. OE. sum = O.Icel. sum-r *some*, OE. tunge = O.Icel. tunga *tongue*. O.Icel. flytja = ME. flitten, flütten *to flit, migrate*, OE. cynn = O.Icel. kyn *kin, kindred*, O.Icel. styttá from older \*stynta = ME. stinten, stenten, stünten *to stint, stop*, see § 49, O.Icel. systur = ME. sister.

§ 165. From the examples of long vowels given below it will be seen that with the exception of Germanic *ā* (§ 52) we have no means of determining from the long vowel alone whether the word containing it is of Scandinavian or English origin, as OE. dōman, dēman, ME. dēmen = O.Icel. dōma *to judge*, OE. ME. hēr = O.Icel. hēr *here*, O.Icel. sēr = ME. sēr *separately*. OE. bītan, ME. biten = O.Icel. bīta *to bite*, O.Icel. típinde = ME. típende *tidings, news*, O.Icel. þrífa-sk = ME. þríven *to thrive*. OE. ME. fōt = O.Icel. fōt-r *foot*, O.Icel. bōn = ME. bōne *request*, O.Icel. rōt = ME. rōte *root*. OE. ME. hūs = O.Icel. hūs *house*, O.Icel. būin-n = ME. boune *ready*, O.Icel. drūpa = ME. droupen *to droop*. Pl. OE. mȳs, ME. mīs, mēs, mūs (§ 57) = O.Icel. mȳss *mice*, O.Icel. brȳnn = ME. brīn *eyebrow*, O.Icel. þrȳsta = ME. þristen, þrēsten, þrūsten *to thrust*.

§ 166. The treatment of Germanic *ā* is entirely different in O.Icel. and OE. In O.Icel. it became *ā*, whereas in OE. it became *ē* (= ME. *ē*) in the Anglian and Kentish dialects, but remained in WS. Before nasals it became *ō* (= ME. *ō*) in all the OE. dialects. In this case we have an excellent test. If a ME. word is of Scandinavian origin it has *ā*, *ō* (§ 51), if it is of English origin it has *ē*, *ē* (§ 52), and *ō* before nasals, as O.Icel. ār = ME. ār, ȝr beside OE. *ær* *formerly, before*, O.Icel. grā-r = ME. grā, grō beside OE.

græg, ME. *grei grey*, O.Icel. *hār* = ME. *hāre*, *hōre* beside OE. *hār*, *hēr*, ME. *hēr*, *hēr hair*, O.Icel. *lāta* = ME. *lāten*, *lōten* beside OE. *lātan*, *lētan*, ME. *lēten*, *lēten* to *let*, O.Icel. *rāpa* = ME. *rāpen*, *rōpen* beside OE. *rādan* to *counsel*, O.Icel. *vāpn* = ME. *wāpen*, *wōpen* beside OE. *wāpen weapon*, O.Icel. *vōrom* from older \**vārum* = ME. *wāren*, *wōren* beside OE. *wāron we were*, OE. *mōna* = ME. *mōne* = O.Icel. *māne moon*. A similar distinction existed in ME. when the O.Icel. *ā* corresponded to OE. *ēa*, of whatever origin, as O.Icel. *fā-r* = ME. *fā*, *fō* beside OE. *fēawe*, ME. *fēwe few*, O.Icel. *flā* = ME. *flā(n)*, *flō(n)*, beside OE. *flēan*, ME. *flē(n)* to *flay*, O.Icel. *slā* = ME. *slā(n)*, *slō(n)*, beside OE. *slēan*, ME. *slē(n)* to *slay*.

§ 167. A good test as to whether a ME. form is of Scandinavian or native English origin is to be found in the treatment of the Germanic diphthongs in the Scandinavian and English languages, especially the diphthongs *ai*, *au*, and the i-umlaut of the latter diphthong, as will be seen from the table given below. It should be noted that in O.Icel. the Germanic diphthong *eu* became a rising diphthong, viz. *jū* before *f*, *p*, *g*, *k*, and *jō* in all other positions. At the time, however, when Scandinavian loan-words came into English the diphthong from Germanic *eu* must have been a falling diphthong, because it had the same development in ME. as OE. *ēo*, that is it became *ē*, so that no further notice of it will be taken here.

Prim. Germ.	<i>ai</i>	<i>au</i>	<i>eu</i>	
O.Icel.	<i>ei</i>	<i>au</i>	<i>jō (jū)</i>	<i>ey</i>
ME.	<i>ei(ai)</i>	<i>ou</i>	<i>ē</i>	<i>ei(ai)</i>
OE.	<i>ā</i>	<i>ēa</i>	<i>ēo</i>	<i>īe</i>
ME.	<i>ā(ō)</i>	<i>ē</i>	<i>ē</i>	<i>ī, ū, ē</i>

§ 168. O.Icel. *ei*: *bleik-r* = ME. *bleik*, *blaik* beside OE. *blāc*, ME. *blāk*, *blōk bleak*, *freista* = ME. *freisten* to *ask*, *geit* = ME. *geit*, *gait* beside OE. *gāt*, ME. *gāt*, *gōt goat*,

heil(1) = ME. *heil*, *hail* beside OE. *hāl*, ME. *hāl*, *hōl* *sound*, *whole*, *heipin-n* = ME. *heipen*, *haiþen* beside the OE. mutated form *hāþen*, ME. *hēþen* *heathen*, *leika* = ME. *leiken*, *laiken* beside OE. *lācan* to *play*, *leiþ-r* = ME. *leiþ*, *laiþ* beside OE. *lāþ*, ME. *lāþe*, *lōþe* *loathsome*, *nei* = ME. *nai*, *nay* beside OE. *nā*, ME. *nā*, *nō* *no*, *nay*, *steik* = ME. *steike* *steak*, *þei-r*, *þeirra*, *þeim* = ME. *þei*, *þeire*, *þeim*, NE. *they*, *their*, *them* beside OE. *þā* *those*, *þāra* (*þāra*), *þēm* (*pām*), *veik-r* = ME. *weik*, *waik* beside OE. *wāc*, ME. *wāke*, *wōke* *weak*.

NOTE.—The *ei* in the above and similar words became *ai*, also written *ay*, about 1300 (§ 107), and then in the dialects south of the Humber the *ai* became *ē* before *k* about the end of the fourteenth century, as *wēk* beside older *weik* *waik* *weak*.

§ 169. O.Icel. *au* : *gaula* = ME. *gōulen* to *howl*, *hlaupa* = ME. *lōupen* beside OE. *hlēapan*, ME. *lēpen* to *leap*, *kaupa* = ME. *cōupen* beside OE. *cēapian*, ME. *chēpen* to *buy*, *laus* = ME. *lōus(e)*, *lōs* *loose* beside OE. *lēas*, ME. *lēs* *false*, *untrue*, *naut* = ME. *naut*, *nōt* beside OE. *nēat*, ME. *nēte* *cattle*, *rauta* = ME. *rōuten* to *bellow*.

§ 170. O.Icel. *ey* : *leysa* = ME. *leisen*, *laisen* beside OE. (Anglian) *lēsan*, ME. *lēsen* to *loosen* (see § 66), *neyta* = ME. *naiten* to *make use of*, *treysta* = ME. *treisten*, *traisten* beside OE. *\*trȳstan*, ME. *trīsten*, *trūsten* to *trust*.

§ 171. In order to keep together the various criteria by which Scandinavian loan-words can be recognized in OE. and ME. we shall also include here the consonants.

§ 172. Initial *w* disappeared in early Old Scandinavian before *ö*, *ū* and *l*, whence forms like *ēpa* = ME. *ēpen* beside OE. *wēpan*, ME. *wēpen* from *\*wōpjan* to *weep*, *ōkr* = ME. *ōker* beside OE. *wōcor* *usury*, *orm-r* *snake* = ME. proper name *Orm*, NE. *Ormsby* beside OE. *wurm*, *wyrm* *snake*, *worm*, *leita* = ME. *leiten*, *laiten* to *seek*, *look for*, beside OE. *wlātian* to *gaze*.

§ 173. Germanic *ḑ* remained in Old Scandinavian, but became *d* in prehistoric OE. (*EOE. Gr.* §§ 113, 133), whence O.Icel. *garḡ-r enclosure, yard* = ME. *garþ* and many mod. n. dialects *garth* beside OE. *geard*, ME. *ḡard, ȝerd yard*, O.Icel. *rāða* = ME. *rāpen, rōpen* beside OE. *rādan, rēdan*, ME. *rēden, rēden to advise, counsel*, O.Icel. *tíðinde* = ME. *tīpende tīpinde* beside ME. *tīdende, tīdinde tidings, news*: OE. *tīd time*.

§ 174. Old Scandinavian had no trace whatever of the palatalization of Germanic *k* when originally followed by a palatal vowel, whereas the *k* in this position became palatalized in prehistoric OE. (*EOE. Gr.* § 166), and then in late OE. or early ME. it became assimilated to *tš*, written *ch*, in all the dialects, see Hoops, *Wissenschaftliche Forschungsberichte*, pp. 78-9, but in other positions it remained both in OE. and ME. Examples are: O.Icel. *kirkja* = ME. *kirke*, mod. n. dialects *kirk* beside OE. *cir(i)ce*, ME. *chir(e)che church*, O.Icel. *kirna* = mod. n. dialects *kirn* beside ME. *chirne churn*, O.Icel. *kista* = mod. n. dialects *kist* beside OE. *cest, cist*, ME. *cheste, chiste chest*, O.Icel. *diki* = ME. *dike* beside OE. *dīc*, ME. *dīch*, NE. *dike* beside *ditch*, O.Icel. *ketill* = ME. *ketel* beside OE. *cietel*, ME. *chetel kettle*. But O.Icel. *kald-r*, OE. *ceald, cald*, ME. *cāld, cōld cold*, O.Icel. *kalla*, late OE. *ceallian*, ME. *callen to call*, O.Icel. *kenna*, OE. *cennan*, ME. *kennen* from *\*kannjan to know, recognize*.

§ 175. Initial, medial, and final *sk* is a good test, because there can be no doubt that *sk* (*sc*) became *sch* in ME. native words, see § 161. Examples are: O.Icel. *skel* = mod. n. dialects *skel* beside OE. *sciell*, ME. *schelle shell*, O.Icel. *skifta* = ME. *skiften*, mod. n. dialects *skift* beside OE. *sciftan*, ME. *schiften to shift*, O.Icel. *aska* = ME. *aske* beside OE. *asce*, ME. *asche ashes*, *fisk-r* = ME. *fisk* (Orm pl. *fisskess*) beside OE. *fisc*, ME. *fisch fish*.

§ 176. The Germanic initial spirant *ȝ* became the ex-

plosive *g* in the Old Scandinavian languages, and also during the OE. period before guttural vowels, but remained in OE. before palatal vowels (*EOE. Gr.* § 168), whence we have O.Icel. *g*-, but OE. and ME. *g*- beside *ȝ*-, as O.Icel. *gaf* = ME. *gaf* beside OE. *geaf*, ME. *ȝaf*, *ȝef* *he gave*, O.Icel. *gapa* = ME. *gāpen* *to yawn, gape*, O.Icel. *garn* = ME. and many mod. dialects *garn* beside OE. *gearn yarn*, O.Icel. *garð-r* *enclosure, yard* = ME. *garþ* beside OE. *geard*, ME. *ȝard*, *ȝerd* *yard*, O.Icel. *gat* *hole, opening* = ME. *gat*, *gāte* (cp. § 292) beside OE. *geat*, ME. *ȝat*, *ȝet*, and many mod. dialects *yat*, *yet* *gate*, O.Icel. *geta* = ME. *gēten* *to get*, beside OE. only in compounds, as *forġietan*, ME. *forȝēten* *to forget*.

§ 177. Germanic medial *ȝ*, of whatever origin, became *gg* in the prehistoric period of all the Germanic languages, which in OE. became differentiated into palatal *gg* (written *cg*) and guttural *gg* under the same conditions as those by which Germanic *k* became differentiated into palatal and guttural *k* (§ 280). The guttural *gg* remained in OE. and ME., but palatal *gg* became assibilated to *dȝ* (written *gg*) in late OE. or early ME., as OE. *dogga*, ME. *dogge* *dog*, but OE. *licgan*, ME. *liggen* (= *\*lidȝen*) *to lie down*. Examples are: O.Icel. *bryggja* = ME. *brigge* and mod. n. and Midl. dialects *brig* beside OE. *brycg*, ME. *brigge*, *brügge* *bridge*, O.Icel. *eggja* = ME. *eggen* *to egg on*, O.Icel. *hrygg-r* = ME. and many mod. dialects *rig* beside OE. *hrycg*, ME. *rigge*, *rügge* *ridge, back*, O.Icel. *liggja* = ME. *liggen* and many mod. dialects *lig* beside OE. *licgan*, ME. *liggen* *to lie down*.

## 2. THE FRENCH ELEMENT IN ME.

§ 178. The French element which gained a permanent footing in ME. was far greater in amount than the sum total of all the other foreign elements, and it also differed very materially in its nature from those elements. The

Scandinavian element consisted for the most part of everyday words, such as would be used by the common people, whereas the French element was largely composed of words representing a higher culture or state of civilization than either the Scandinavian or the native element, such as military, ecclesiastical, legal, hunting, and heraldic terms. This is accounted for by the fact that the Anglo-Normans belonged to the upper classes, whereas the Scandinavians belonged chiefly to the yeoman and agricultural classes. Hence it may be said that the French or Anglo-Norman element penetrated from the higher to the lower classes, whereas the Scandinavian element penetrated from the lower to the upper classes, in so far as such words were permanently incorporated into the standard language.

§ 179. As a result of the Norman Conquest French in England had become the language of the Court, of the nobility, of the clergy, and indeed of all who wished for and sought advancement in Church or State. Robert of Gloucester (1298) thus describes the important position of French in the England of his day: 'Lo! thus came England into Normandy's hand and the Normans could then speak nothing but their own tongue. They spoke French as they did at home, and taught their children to do likewise, so that men of high rank in the country, who are their descendants, keep to that same tongue, which they inherited from them, for unless a man knows French, he is little esteemed. But the lower ranks still keep to English, their own native tongue. I believe there is no country in all the world, save England only, that keeps not to its native speech. But one knows well, that it is good to be able to speak both, for the more knowledge a man has, the greater his worth,' see Morris and Skeat's *Specimens of Early English*, Part II, pp. 8-9. In the same volume (pp. 240-2) another interesting passage bearing on this subject is to be found in John of Trevisa's translation of Higden's



*Polychronicon* (1387). He records how the English 'birth-tongue' has become 'impaired' by the admixture of too much French, for one reason because 'children in school, contrary to the usage and manner of all other nations, are compelled to neglect their own language and construe their lessons and hear things in French, and have done so, since the Normans came first into England'. But he goes on to tell us in an additional passage of his own authorship, that in the year of our Lord 1385 'in all the grammar schools of England, children neglect French, and construe and learn in English'.

§ 180. It has been estimated that the population of this country, including the Scandinavians, was about two millions at the time of the Norman Conquest, and that of these one-fourth were killed or otherwise disappeared during the Conqueror's reign, and that on the other hand at least 500,000 Frenchmen settled in England during his reign, so that there was for a time great danger lest the English language should be ousted by Norman-French. Had it not been for the strong infusion of Scandinavian settlers in England at this period, whose influence would tend towards the preservation of the kindred Germanic tongue, this danger would probably not have been averted.

§ 181. But the French element in ME. is not wholly Anglo-Norman, there was also a certain infusion of Central French, or, as it is sometimes termed, Parisian French. For some time Anglo-Norman prevailed, but gradually it came to be regarded as an inferior dialect of Old French, and already in the thirteenth century and onwards into the fourteenth century, the educated and upper classes began to learn and to speak Central French. And Anglo-Norman practically died out as a spoken language. This brought about the introduction of a large number of Central French words into the standard ME. of authors like Chaucer, Lydgate, &c. Nearly all the words introduced during the

fifteenth century are from Central French. This admixture of the two French elements gave rise to many double forms in ME., the one being chiefly used by the lower and the other by the educated classes. And the difference between the forms manifested itself especially in the treatment of the vowels of unaccented syllables. Some of these differences are still reflected in the standard language and the dialects of the present day, as *edjūkeit*, *edžūkeit* : *edikēt*, *-eet educate*, *fiṭṣə* : *fiətə feature*, *kṙzn* : *kuzin cousin*, *væl-jū* : *valə vali value*, &c.

§ 182. French was the language used in the Courts of Law until 1362, in which year it was decreed by an Act of Parliament that all pleadings in the Courts should henceforth be conducted in English, because, as is stated in the preamble to the Act, French was 'become much unknown in the realm'. But the mongrel French known as 'Law French' continued to exist for centuries later, and it was not finally abolished until 1731. The Proceedings in Parliament were recorded in French till 1483, when Richard III introduced a reform whereby the Statutes were for the first time drawn up in English. French or Latin was used at the Universities, and it was not until 1349 that boys in schools began to learn Latin through the medium of English instead of French.

§ 183. The French element only found its way gradually into literature, and its influx was always much greater in the South than in the North, a difference still reflected in the modern English dialects. The Peterborough Chronicle, which was continued until 1154, contains only fourteen French words. The total number of French loan-words up to the end of the twelfth century amounts only to about a hundred. Between 1250 and 1350 hundreds of words were introduced, and then, after about the year 1400, the numbers began to decrease rapidly. As far as literature is concerned the period of greatest influx was between 1250

and 1400, the highest point being reached during the second half of the fourteenth century. Chaucer employed a far greater number of French words than any other author of his day. As an illustration of the French element in early ME. literature may be quoted the number of French words found in three works belonging to different dialects of the early part of the thirteenth century :—The *Ormulum* (about 1200), consisting of more than 20,000 lines, contains only about 20; Lazamon's *Brut*, Text A (about 1203), consisting of 32,241 short lines, and based upon Wace's *Le Roman de Brut*, contains only 87; and the *Ancren Riwele* (about 1210), consisting of about 200 printed pages, contains 500. In conclusion it may be noted that French nouns and adjectives were generally taken over in their accusative forms (O.Fr. generally: nom. sing. -s, acc. sing. no -s; nom. pl. no -s, acc. pl. -s). In the verbs the strong stem-form of the present sing. sometimes became the type for the whole of the inflexion, but sometimes the weak stem-form of the plural became the type, hence in ME. we often have side by side double forms, as *destruien* beside *destroyen*, *prêven* beside *prôven*, see §§ 198, 202.

§ 184. Now that some account has been given of the nature and amount of the French loan-words in ME. we will proceed to look at the subject from a philological point of view. Although it is true that after A.N. and C.Fr. words were introduced into English they underwent all further changes in common with the native English words containing the same sounds, yet from a philological point of view it is necessary to know not only how the words were pronounced at the time they were introduced, but also to know what special phonological changes they underwent at the time of their introduction. But this knowledge can only be acquired by treating the subject in much the same manner as the native element is generally treated in passing from OE. to ME. By adopting this method of treatment some

light can be thrown upon many phonological points connected with the native element in ME. By way of illustration a few such points may be mentioned here:—

1. However early AN. words containing long *ā* were introduced, they were not introduced early enough for the long *ā* to fall together with OE. long *ā* in ME. except in the northern dialects (§ 51). From this we can infer that OE. long *ā* began to be rounded to *ō* at a very early period, cp. ME. *cāve*, *damāge*, *dāme* beside *bōt*, *stōn*, *tō toe*.

2. The ME. *ō* from AN. *o* in open syllables fell together with the OE. *o* in open syllables, as *cōte coat*, *rōse rose* beside *prōte* (OE. *prote*) *throat*, *hōpen* (OE. *hopian*) *to hope*, but not with the ME. *ō* from OE. *ā*, as in *bōt* (OE. *bāt*) *boat*, *stōn* (OE. *stān*) *stone*. This is clearly proved by the difference in the development of the two kinds of *ō* in the modern dialects, *kōit*, *prōit* beside *buōt*, *stuōn* (§ 51, note).

3. And similarly the modern dialects show that the ME. *ē* from older *ei* in AN. words (§ 205, 2) fell together with the ME. *ē* from OE. *æ* (= the i-umlaut of *ā*) and *ēa* (§§ 52, 63), but not with the *ē* from OE. *e* in open syllables (§ 80).

4. The OE. *ū*-sound (written *y*) remained in the west Midland and southern dialects until the end of the fourteenth century and then became unrounded to *i* (§ 49, 3), but the *ū* in closed syllables of AN. words was never unrounded to *i* in the above dialects, but became *u* during the ME. period (§ 193), which shows that the two kinds of *ū* had not precisely the same pronunciation otherwise they would regularly have fallen together. And in like manner the OE. *ū*-sound (written *ȳ*) remained in the above dialects until the end of the fourteenth century, and then became unrounded to *ī* (§ 57, 3), but the *ū*, of whatever origin, in AN. words was never unrounded to *ī*; for it *iu* was substituted in all the dialects of England, see § 202.

§ 185. Before entering upon the history of the AN. simple

vowels and diphthongs in ME. it will be useful to state here a few general principles concerning the vowel-system in general.

1. All the nasal vowels became denasalized and then these oral vowels generally had in ME. the same further development as the corresponding original oral vowels.

2. All final accented vowels were long or became long in ME.

3. All short vowels with the exception of *e* were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms. *e* was rarely lengthened in this position.

4. Short vowels were lengthened in monosyllables before a single final consonant.

5. Short vowels were lengthened before a mute + liquid.

6. Short vowels were generally lengthened before *st* (§ 203).

7. Short accented vowels were lengthened before another vowel in dissyllabic words.

8. Vowels were short before consonant combinations other than a mute + liquid. They also remained short in open syllables of trisyllabic words.

The cause of the lengthening of the stem-vowel in type 4 was due to the inflected forms, just as in ME. native words like *cōle* (OE. *col*, gen. *coles*) *coal* (§ 81), &c. The stem-vowel in words of types 5 and 6 was in reality generally in an open syllable, because the following consonant combinations mostly belonged to the second syllable. There was a tendency to shorten the vowel again in types 5 and 6, especially when the final *-e* ceased to be pronounced, as *propre*, *couple*, *double*, *trouble*; *arest*, *best* beside *bēst* *beast*, *forest*, *tempest*, &c.

9. Instead of the AN. the O.Fr. vowel-system is sometimes taken as the basis for treating the AN. element in ME. When that is the case it should be remembered that several of the O.Fr. diphthongs underwent changes in AN. ; the most

important of the independent changes are given in the following table:—

O.Fr.	ai,	oi,	üi,	ie,	ue
AN.	ei,	ui,	ũ,	ē,	ō

10. As a result of the AN. element in ME. two new diphthongs were added to those already existing in the native element, viz. *oi* and *ui*.

11. In dealing with the vowels we have to distinguish between: (1) the vowels of accented syllables, (2) the vowels of pretonic syllables, and (3) the vowels of post-tonic syllables and unaccented syllables generally.

#### 1. THE VOWELS OF ACCENTED SYLLABLES.

§ 186. The O.Fr. and AN. accented vowels in early borrowed words, which became post-tonic in ME. through shifting of the accent, remained for a time unchanged, and then later became weakened down through loss of the new secondary accent.

##### a. *The Short Vowels.*

§ 187. The short vowels generally remained before the consonant combinations which had short vowels before them in native words. They also remained in open syllables of trisyllabic forms. The short nasalized vowels became denasalized and then generally had the same further development as the old oral vowels. Examples are:—

§ 188. *a* :, as *balle*, *cacchen*, *calme*, *charge*, *charme*, *large*, *part*, *scarce*; *angle*, *blank*, *cancre*, *frank*, *janglen*, cp. § 211.

§ 189. AN. *ɛ* and *ɛ* generally appear in ME. as *ɛ* both in closed and open syllables, as *accepten*, *castel*, *clerk*, *detesten*, *desert*, *dette* *debt*, *distresse*, *lettre*, *medlen*, *perche*, *pressen*, *serchen*, *taverne*, *terme*, *werre* *war*,

but *cēsen* beside *cessen* to *cease*. The *e* was often lengthened before *r* + consonant, see § 196. *assenten*, *attempten*, *defenden*, *membre*, *menden*, *presence*, *silence*. This *e* became *i* before *nk* at the same time *e* became *i* in native words, as *enke*, *inke* (O.Fr. *enque*), see § 132.

§ 190. *i* :, as *consīderen*, *deliveren*, *dische*, *epistle*, *finischen*, *punischen*, *resisten*, *riche*; *prince*, *simple*, cp. § 199.

§ 191. *o* :, as *apostle*, *cofre*, *fors force*, *loggen* to *lodge*, *ordre*, *propre*, *robben*, *rollen*. But the *o* was often lengthened before *r* + consonant, see § 200.

§ 192. *u* : O.Fr. *o* and *u* fell together in *u* in AN., and then the *u* generally remained in ME., as *discuvren*, *purpre purple*, *purse*, *puschen* (*poschen*) to *push*, *turnen*, *turtle*; with *u* = O.Fr. *o*, as *encumbren*, *nombre*, *summe*, *trumpe trumpet*.

§ 193. AN. *ü* (written *u*) remained in early ME., but during the ME. period it became *u*, as *juggen* to *judge*, *just*, *purgen* to *purge*, *sepulcre*, *studien*; *humble*.

#### b. *The Long Vowels.*

§ 194. All final accented vowels became long. Short vowels were lengthened in monosyllables before a single consonant. Short accented vowels were also lengthened before another vowel in dissyllabic words. All vowels (except *e*) were lengthened in open syllables of dissyllabic forms, and also before two consonants belonging to the second syllable.

§ 195. *ā* :, as *blāme*, *cās case*, *cāve*, *debāte*, *escāpen*, *dāme*, *declāren*, *generāl*, *grāpe*, *lāke*, *pāle*, *pās*; *fāble*, *mirācle*, *tāble*; *āge* (= \**ā-dže*), and similarly *cāge*, *corāge*, *damāge*, *homāge*, *imāge*; *grāce* (= \**grā-tse*), *chācen*, *plāce*, *trācen*. But the *ā* in AN. *-arie* = C.Fr. *-aire* from Lat. *-arium* remained short in open syllables, and also

generally in ME. verbs ending in -arien, as *adversarie*, *Februarie*, *necessarie*; *carien*, *marien*, *tarien*.

§ 196. O.Fr. *ē*, as *clēr clear*, *condicionēl*, *eternēl*, *hostēl*, *nēt neat*, *requēren to require*, *wēre* beside *werre war*, but O.Fr. *e* before *r* + consonant, as *pērcen (pērcen) to pierce*, *pērle*, *sērchen*, *tērme*, see § 205.

§ 197. 1. *ē* = O.Fr. *e*, as *beautē beauty*, *chapēle* beside *chappelle*, *daungēr*, *frēre brother*, *pitē pity*, *succēden*. AN. -*ēje*, -*ie* (= O.Fr. -*ēe* from Lat. -*āta*-) became -*ie* (-*ey*) in ME. O.Fr. -*ēe* also became *ē* in forms introduced into ME., although the second *e* was preserved in writing, hence in ME. we often have double forms, as *countreie* and *countreē*, *entreie* and *entreē*, *journeie* and *journeē*, *valeie* and *valeē valley*.

2. O.Fr. *ie* became *ē* in AN. about 1150 and then the *ē* remained in ME., sometimes written *ie*, as *achēven*, *fēble*, *grēven to grieve*, *manēre matēre*, *nēce niece*, *pēce piece piece*, *preiēre prayer*, *relēven*, *rivēre*, *sēge siege*; *brēf*, *chēf*, *grēf grief grief*, *meschēf mischief*; *contēnen*, *maintēnen*, *sustēnen*. The verbs of this type were later remodelled after the analogy of verbs like *ordeinen*, see § 210.

§ 198. O.Fr. *ue* became *ō* in AN. and then the *ō* had the same further development in ME. as OE. *ēo* (§ 65), that is it became unrounded to *ē* in all the dialects except the west Midland and the southern dialects, but in these latter dialects it also became unrounded to *ē* about the end of the fourteenth century. It was often written *eo* and in the west Midland and southern dialects also *oe*, *ue*, *o*, and *u*, see § 65. Examples are: *bēf beef*, *contrēven to contrive*, *dēl doel duel sadness*, *mēven to move*, *pēple poeple people people*, *prēf proof*, *prēven*, *reprēven*. The verbal forms had in O.Fr. *ue* in the first pers. singular and *ō* in the first pers. plural, as *muef*, pl. *mōvons*. In ME. the strong form of the singular generally became the type for the whole inflexion,



but sometimes the weak form of the plural became the type, hence in ME. we have side by side *apprēven* and *apprōven*, *mēven* and *mōven*, *prēven* and *prōven*, &c. The ē, ȝ were shortened to e, o before an r in the following syllable, as *keveren*, *koveren* to *cover*, &c.

§ 199. ī: as *arrīven*, *companīe*, *crȳen*, *deffȳen*, *denȳen*, *delīt* *delight*, *desȳr*, *despīsen*, *devisen*, *dīnen*, *entīcen*, *justīse*, *malīce*, *mercȳ*, *strīven*; *gentīl*, *leisīr*, *prȳs*, *strīf*; *bīble*, *tīgre*; *fīn* *fine*, *basīn*, *gardīn*. The i also became ī before n + dental, as *pīnte*, but *prīnce*, &c.

§ 200. ȝ (= Lat. au, ȝ): as *clȝke*, *clȝsen*, *cȝte*, *dispȝsen*, *nȝble*, *nȝte*, *repȝsen*, *reprȝchen*, *restȝren*, *rȝbe*, *rȝse*, *suppȝsen*, *tresȝr*; and also before r + consonant, as *fȝrce*, *fȝrge*, *pȝrk*, *pȝrt*. Beside *fȝl* *fool*, *pȝre* (O.Fr. *povre*) *poor*, *trȝne* *throne* we have *fȝl*, *pȝre*, *trȝne*. AN. *-orie* (= C.Fr. *-oire*) became *-ȝrie* in ME., as *glȝrie*, *memȝrie*, *stȝrie*, *victȝrie*.

§ 201. ū (= AN. u O.Fr. ȝ), as *allowen*, *clamour*, *creatour*, *culour*, *devouren*, *devout*, *doute* *doubt*, *flour* *flower*, *goute*, *gracious*, *honour*, *houre*, *labour*, *poudre*, *sermoun*, *tour* *tower*, *touchen*; before r + consonant, as *course*, *court*, *sours* *source*; before mb, n, nd, nt, nce, nge (= ndž), as *abounden*, *acount*, *amount*, *condicioun*, *count*, *encountren*, *lioun*, *mount*, *ounce*, *pardoun*, *ploungen*, *prisoun*, *pronouncen*, *renoun*, *rȝsoun* *reason*, *round*, *soun* *sound*, *toumbe*, but always *uncle*. The ū afterwards underwent shortening in *couple*, *double*, *ploungen*, *touchen*, *troublen*.

§ 202. ū = 1. O.Fr. and AN. ū from Lat. ū. The pure ū-sound did not exist in any of the dialects of England at the time the AN. words containing this sound were introduced. There was a kind of ū-sound in the west Midland and some of the southern dialects, but it was different from the AN. sound, as is evidenced by the subsequent history of the two sounds both in ME. and the modern dialects (cp.

§ 57). For AN. *ū* was substituted what seemed to the English ear the nearest equivalent, viz. *iu*, and this is also the case in modern times when English people without a knowledge of phonetics attempt to reproduce Modern French *ū*. In the older loan-words it was generally written *u*, as *duren*, *usen*, *vertu*, and later also *eu*, *ew*, *iu*, *yw* (cp. §§ 112, 116). Examples are: *accūsen*, *būgle*, *dūren*, *creatūre*, *cūren*, *dūk duke*, *figūre*, *fortūne*, *mesūre*, *pūr*, *rūde*, *refūsen*, *refūten*, *sūgre sugar*, *sūr*, *ūsen*.

2. = O.Fr. *ui* (from Lat. *ū*, *ō* + *i*) became *ū* in AN. for which *iu* was substituted in ME., written *u* (*ui*), *eu*, *ew*, *iu*, *iw*, as *fruit frut*, *pu pew puw pew*, *suit*. The verbal forms had in O.Fr. *ui* in the first pers. sing. and *qi* in the first pers. plural. In ME. the strong form of the singular generally became the type for the whole of the inflexion, but sometimes the weak form of the plural became the type, hence in ME. we have side by side forms like *anuien* and *anoiēn*, *destruēn* and *destruēn*, *vuidēn* and *voidēn*.

§ 203. Before *st* we often have double forms just as in native English words (cp. § 97), and one or other of the forms became generalized, as *chāste*, *hāste*; *bēste*, *fēste* *feast*, but *arest*, *forest*, *tempest*; *Chrīst*; *bōsten*, *cōste* *coast*, *hōst*, *pōst*, *rōsten*, *tōsten*, but *cost*, *costen*; *crouste* but later *cruste*; *jūst*.

§ 204. In place of long vowel + a single consonant, we sometimes have a short vowel + double consonant, as *chapelle*: *chapēle*, *passen*: *pās*; *cessen*: *cēsen* *to cease*, *dette*: *dēte* *debt*, *lettre*: *lētre*, *plegge*: *plēge* *pledge*, *werre*: *wēre* *war*; *quitte*: *quīte*; *loggen*: *lōgen* *to lodge*, *proffren*: *prōfren*; *copple* (*o* = *u*): *couple*; *sūgge*: *sūgre* *sugar*, &c.

### c. *The Diphthongs.*

ai, ei

§ 205. O.Fr. *ai* and *ei* fell together in *ei* in AN. and then the *ei* became *ai* in ME. at the same time as *ei* became *ai* in

native words (§ 107). And then later the *ai* became *ē* before consonants, especially before liquids, dentals, and *s*, so that in ME. we often have *ē* beside *ai*, and *ei*.

Examples are:—

1. O.Fr. *ai*, as *aiden*, *air*, *assaïen* *to test*, *claiemen*, *delai*, *gai*, *grain*, *lai lay*, *song*, *maire mayor*, *maistre*, *païen* *to pay*, *plain*, *repaiïen*, *vain*.

2. O.Fr. *ei*, as *conveïen*, *despeïr*, *deceïven*, *displeïen*, *heïr*, *obeïen*, *moneïe*, *peïne pain*, *preïen*, *receïven*.

3. O.Fr. *ai* and *ei*, as *decēven*, *dēs* (*deis*) *table*, *disēse*, *frēle* (*fraïle*) *frail*, *ēse* (*aise*) *ease*, *enchrēsen*, *grēse*, *mēre* (*maïre*), *pēs* (*païs*) *peace*, *plēden*, *plēsen*, *recēt* (*reçeit*) *receipt*, *recēven* (*receïven*), *sēsen* (*saisën*) *to seize*, *trēten*.

#### oi

§ 206. AN. *oi* (= O.Fr. *oi* from Lat. *au* + *i*) remained in ME., as *chōis* *choice*, *clōistre*, *jōie*, *nōise*, *pōïsen* *to poise*. The *oi* from older *ei* in C.Fr. loan-words also remained, as *coi*, *devoir*, *employen*, *exploit*, &c.

#### ui

§ 207. O.Fr. *oi*, *ui* (from Lat. *o*, *u* + *i*) = AN. *ui* which remained in ME. and also in NE. until the eighteenth century, although it was generally written *oi* (*oy*), as *accointen* *to acquaint*, *enointen*, *joint*, *point*, *poïsen* *to poison*, &c. Forms like *vōïce*, *mōïst* were from Central French.

#### au

§ 208. O.Fr. and AN. *au* from older *a* + *i* remained in early ME., and then later it became *ā* before labials, as *assault*, *fauchon* *falchion*, *heraud*, *paume* later *pāme* *palm of the hand*, *sauce*, *sauf* later *sāf* *safe*, *sauven* later *sāven*, see § 213, 1.

## eu

§ 209. AN. *eu* (= O.Fr. *ieu*) remained in early ME. and then became *iu* at the same time that *eu* in native words became *iu*, written *u*, *eu*, *ew*, *iu*, *iw*, see § 112, as *adewe adieu*, *Jew Jiw*, *reule rewle riule rule*; and similarly O.Fr. *eu* from older *ou*, as *corfew curfew*, *blew bliw blue*, *nevew nephew*.

d. *The Formation of New Diphthongs.*

§ 210. Palatal *i*<sup>1</sup> and *n*<sup>1</sup> generally became *il* and *in*, and then the *i* combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong or *i* when the preceding vowel was *i*, as *assailen*, *availen*, *barain barren*, *bataile*, *certain*, *fountaine*, *gainen*, *maille mail*, *montaine mountain*, *railen*, *souverain*, *travail*, *vitaille victuals*. *atteinen*, *citesein*, *desdeyn*, *disdain*, *compleynen*, *feinen* to *feign*, *feint*, *merveille marvel*, *ordeinen*, *peinten*, *reine reign*, *restreinen*, *veile*. And then the *ei* became *ai* at the same time as *ei* in native words became *ai* (§ 107). *Coloigne Cologne*. *ui* (written *oi*) from O.Fr. *ui*, as *boilen*, *joinen*, *oile*, *soile*, *spoilén*. O.Fr. *üi* which became *ü* in AN. and for which *iu* was substituted in ME., written *u*, *ui* (see § 202, 2), as *impugnen*, *Juil Jul July*, *Juin Jun June*. *benigne benine*, where *·ign* = *·in*, and similarly *resignen*, *signe*, *vigne*; *peril*. When the diphthongs in the above and similar examples lost their secondary accent during the ME. period they were generally weakened down to *e*, although the old spelling was generally preserved.

§ 211. Between *a* and a nasal belonging to the same syllable a glide was developed in AN., which in ME. combined with the preceding vowel to form the diphthong *au*, before final *n*, before *m* + labial, and *n* + dental (= *n* + *d*, *t* or *s*, *n* + *dž* or *tš*), as *aungel*, *aunte*, *balaunce*, *braunche*, *chaumbre*, *chaunce*, *daunce* *daunse*, *demaunden*,

distaunce, exaample, garlaunde, graunten, haunten, jaumbe, laumpe, paun, plesaunt, slaundre, servaunt, vaunten. And then later the *au* became *ā* before *m* + labial and *n* + *dž* or *tš*, see § 213, 1.

§ 212. The *ā* which arose from the above *au* before *n* + *dž* or *tš* became *ai* in some parts of the western and northern areas about the end of the fourteenth century, as *chaynge*, *raynge*, *straynge*; *braynche* *branch*, *staynche* to *stanch*.

e. *Monophthongization.*

§ 213. Before certain consonant combinations some of the diphthongs became monophthongs about the end of the thirteenth and early part of the fourteenth century:—

1. *au* became *ā* before labials, *n* + *dž* or *tš*, *dž* and *tš*, as *āngel*, *bāme* older *baum* *bawm* *balm*, *brānche*, *chāmbre*, *jāmbē*, *lāmpē*; *fāchon* *falchion*, *gāgen*, *sāfe*, *sāvage*, *sāven* to *save*, see §§ 208, 211.

2. *ai*, *ui* became *a*, *u* before *š* and *s* + consonant, as *abaschen* older *abaischen* to *abash*, *ascheler* (O.Fr. *aisselier*) *ashlar*, *māster* older *maister*, *casche* (O.Fr. *caisse*); *buschel* (O.Fr. *buissel*), *cuschin* older *quischin* *cushion*, *cruschen* older *cruischen* to *crush*.

3. *ēu* became *ē* before labials, as *fīēme* older *fīēume* *phlegm*, *rēme* older *rēume* (*reaume*) *realm*.

f. *Vowel Contraction.*

§ 214. Vowel contraction took place partly in AN. and partly in ME., especially when the second vowel or diphthong was *e*, *i*, *u*, or *ei*, *oi*, as *sēl* (O.Fr. *sēel*) *seal*, *vēl* (O.Fr. *vēel*) *real*, *chaine* (O.Fr. *chaēine*), *coīn* (O.Fr. *cooin*) *quince*, *brawn* (O.Fr. *braoun*), *mirour* (O.Fr. *mireūr*), *sūr* (O.Fr. *seūr*) *sure*; O.Fr. third pers. sing. *obeīt* *he obeys*, pl. *obeissent*, whence ME. *obeien* beside *obeischen*, and

similarly *abaischen* to *abash*, *traien* beside *traischen* to *betray*, *rejgischen* to *rejoice*.

Contraction also took place when intervocalic *i*-consonant disappeared, as *dēn* (O.Fr. *deien*) *dean*, *lēl* (O.Fr. *leiel*) *loyal*, *mēn* (O.Fr. *meien*) *mean*, *middle*.

## 2. THE VOWELS OF PRETONIC SYLLABLES.

§ 215. The O.Fr. and AN. pretonic vowels and diphthongs which became tonic (accented) through the shifting of the accent generally remained in ME. The short vowels except *e* were, however, generally lengthened before a following vowel and in open syllables of early borrowed words, but remained short in later borrowed words.

### a. *The Simple Vowels.*

§ 216. *a, ā, au* :, as *amorous*, *baroun*, *bataile*, *carpenter*, *chapēle*, *chariot*, *gardin*, *manēre*, *palais*, *ravenous*, *taverne*, *travaien*. *ā-miable*, *ā-precock* *apricot*, *bācoun*, *bāsīn* *basin*, *flāvour*, *grācious*, *māsoun* *mason*, *nācioun* *nation*, *nātūre* *nature*, *pācient*. AN. *ā* was denasalized to *a* before *nd*, *nt*, and *ng*, as *anguische*, *language*, *mantel*, *standard*. In other positions it had the same development as in accented syllables (§ 211), as *auncient*, *brandischen* beside *braundischen*, *chaumpion*, *chauncel*, *daungēr*, *raunsoun* *ransom*.

§ 217. *e, ē* :, as *lessoun*, *mercī*, *metal*, *nevew*, *perīl*, *plesaunt*, *present*, *seconde*; *aventūre*, *engīn*, *gentīl*, *plentē*, *tempeste*. *lēsir*, *plēsīr*, *rēsīn* *grape*, *rēsoun* *reason*. Before *r* + consonant we have *ē* later *a* (§ 129), as *gerlaund*, *merchaunt*, *merveille*, *persoune*, *sermoun*, *later* *garlaund*, &c.

§ 218. *i, ī* :, as *citē*, *diner*, *finischen*, *pitē*, *scriptūre*, *viāēgre*. *gīaunt* *giant*, *lioun*, *squīer*. *pīlot*, *ivorie*.

§ 219. *o* :, as *comoun*, *folie* *folly*, *foreste*, *fortūne*, *gobelet*, *honouren*, *office*, *solas* *solace*, *torment*.

§ 220. u, ū (written ou, ow), as buteler, culour, glutoun, muton, sudain, supere. coward, dowere doure *dowry*, powere, towaile *towel*; bountē, counseil, countrē, fontaine, mountaine.

§ 221. ü, ū. ü remained in early ME., but became u during the ME. period (cp. § 125), and iu was substituted for ū (cp. § 202), as duchesse, juggement, punischen. cruel crewel, humilitē, humour, suretē, usage.

b. *The Diphthongs.*

§ 222. The pretonic diphthongs generally had the same development in ME. as the tonic (accented) diphthongs except that ei underwent weakening in medial syllables.

§ 223. ai was generally monophthongized to ē, but forms with ai also occur in ME., as fētūre and faitūre *feature*, rēsoun and raisoun, sēsoun and saisoun, see § 205; the ai remained before old palatal l', as tailour *tailor*, see § 210.

§ 224. ei:, as leisīr *leisure*, preiēre *prayer*, veiāge (O.Fr. *voiage*) *voyage*. curtesie beside older curteisie, orisoun beside older oreisoun, venisoun beside older veneisoun (O.Fr. *venoison*).

§ 225. ɔi:, as jɔious.

§ 226. ui (written oi):, as oinoun *onion*, poisoun *poison*.

§ 227. O.Fr. ūi = AN. ū, for which the iu-sound was substituted in ME. (§ 202, 2), as nuisaunce.

§ 228. au:, as auter *altar*, faucon *fulcon*, saumoun *salmon*, sauvāge (see § 213, 1).

§ 229. eau, ɛu became iu (see § 112), as beautē beutē bewtē *beauty*; fewaile *fuel*, jewel *jewel*.

3. THE VOWELS OF POST-TONIC AND UNACCENTED SYLLABLES GENERALLY.

§ 230. The vowel in post-tonic syllables was always -e, as in chapēle, faute, justise, madāme, natūre, reine *reign*. The final -e in these and similar words disappeared in pro-

nunciation earlier in ME. than the -e in words of English origin. This was especially the case after st, ce (= s) and after vowels, as bēst(e), tempest(e), plāc(e), foli(e) *folly*, maladi(e), prei(e) *prey*. In this respect Chaucer was behind the spoken language of his time. In his poetry the final -e was preserved in pronunciation, and he never allowed words ending in -ce (= s) to rhyme with those ending in -s nor those ending in -ye (-ie) with those ending in -y.

§ 231. Initial e- disappeared before s + tenuis, as Spaine, spȳen, staat beside *estaat*, stūdien, scāpen beside *escāpen*, squirel (O.Fr. *escurel*). Initial vowels also often disappeared before other consonants, as menden beside *amenden*, prentȳs beside *aprentȳs*, pistil beside *epistil*. Initial prefixes often disappeared, as steinen beside *desteinen* to *stain*, sport beside *disport*, saumple beside *ensaumple*.

§ 232. Medial vowels often disappeared between consonants, as chimneie beside *chimeneie* *chimney*, kerchēf beside *keverchēf*, nortūre beside *noritūre*, pantrie beside *panetrie* *pantry*, palfrei beside *palefrei*, &c., cp. § 154.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE ME. DEVELOPMENT OF THE OE. CONSONANT-SYSTEM

§ 233. OE. had the following consonant-system :—

	<i>Labial.</i>	<i>Inter- dental.</i>	<i>Dental.</i>	<i>Guttu- ral.</i>	<i>Pala- tal.</i>
Explosives	voiceless p, pp voiced b, bb		t, tt d, dd	c, cc g, gg	c, cc g, cg
Spirants	voiceless f, ff voiced f	þ, þþ f	s, ss s	h, hh g	h, hh g
Nasals	m, mm		n, nn	n	n
Semi-vowel	w		l, ll; r, rr		



To these must be added the aspirate *h*, and *x*. The double consonants were pronounced long as in Modern Italian and Swedish, thus *habban* = *hab-ban* *to have*, *swimman* = *swim-man* *to swim*.

§ 234. Many of the changes which the OE. consonant-system underwent in ME. were not sound-changes, but merely orthographical changes due to the influence of the Anglo-Norman system of orthography. Most of these changes have been stated in §§ 13-20, and others will be dealt with in the treatment of the separate consonants. The sound-changes which the OE. consonants underwent in ME. were insignificant compared with the vowel-changes. In fact the consonants have changed comparatively little in the whole history of the language, whereas the vowels have been continuously on the change and still are so. It may therefore be said that the consonants in a language like English merely form, as it were, the framework of the language, and that the vowels are the clockwork or living organism. This is quite different from a language like French where the consonants equally with the vowels have undergone great and radical changes in passing from popular Latin to the French of the present day.

§ 235. Before entering upon the history of the individual consonants in ME., it will be well to treat here several consonant-changes which are best dealt with collectively, viz. the voicing and unvoicing of consonants, the vocalization of consonants, assimilation, metathesis, the loss of consonants, and the development of glide consonants.

### 1. THE VOICING OF CONSONANTS.

§ 236. The initial voiceless spirants *f*, *s*, *þ* became the voiced spirants *v*, *z*, *ð* in late OE. or early ME. in Kentish and the southern, especially the south-western dialects, as *vader*, *vat*, *vlesch*, *vrend*; *zaule* *zqule*, *zinne* *zenne*

zünne *sin*, *ŋat ȝet*, *ȝing*. The modern dialects show that this voicing of the initial voiceless spirants must have taken place at an early period, because it is almost exclusively confined to native words, hence the change must have taken place before the great influx of Anglo-Norman words into these dialects. The use of the initial voiced for the voiceless spirants is now obsolete in Ken., Sur., Sus., and obsolescent in s. Pem., Hamp., and the I. W., but it is still in general use in east Hrf., parts of Glo., west Brks., Wil., Som., and Dev. These modern dialects help to throw some light upon the standard NE. voiced *ȝ* (written *th*) in pronouns and the adverbs related to them. There is no indication either in ME. or NE. to show when the *p* became voiced in such words, but the dialects of Sus., Ken., and s. Pem. show that it must have taken place pretty early, because in these dialects the *p* has become *d*, although the forms with *d* are now obsolescent in the two latter counties. Examples are: *deə their, there, dem, den, di the, dis*. These forms with *d* show that the voicing of the *p* in pronominal and adverbial forms was older than the voicing of it in the other OE. words beginning with *p*.

§ 237. In simple words the voiceless spirants *f*, *s*, *p* became voiced between voiced sounds in early OE., although they were always retained in writing, and this rule was also preserved in ME., see *EOE. Gr.* § 139. Final *-s* and *-p* became voiced after voiced sounds during the ME. period in unaccented syllables, although the *-s*, *-p* (*-th*) were retained in writing.

## 2. THE UNVOICING OF CONSONANTS.

§ 238. In early OE. the voiced spirants *v* (written *f*), *ȝ* became voiceless *f*, *x* before voiceless sounds and finally, and this rule was also preserved in early ME., see §§ 266, 308, and *EOE. Gr.* § 140. When final *-e* disappeared at an early period (§ 139) *v* and *ȝ* became unvoiced to *f* and *p*, as *bōpe*,

erþe, froþe, northern dialects *gif to give*, *luf to love*, beside older *give(n)*, *luve(n)*.

§ 239. In early OE. *d* became *t* before and after voiceless consonants. When two dentals thus came together, they became *tt* which were simplified to *t* finally and after consonants (*EOE. Gr.* § 140). This rule also remained as a characteristic feature of the southern dialects in the ME. period, as *bintst* beside older *bindest thou prayest*, *bint* from *\*bindþ*, older *bindeþ he binds*, *bit* from *\*bidþ*, older *bideþ he prays*, &c. And in like manner the *d* also became *t* in the pp. of trisyllabic weak verbs after the loss of the *-e-* in the final syllable, as *punischt*, *witnest* beside older *punished*, *witnessed*, see § 155. In ME. as in the modern dialects (cp. *ED. Gr.* §§ 303-4) there was a tendency to unvoice *d* to *t* in final unaccented syllables. This was especially the case in the preterite and past participle in the Scottish dialects. For the unvoicing of *d* to *t* in the preterite and past participle of verbal stems ending in *-ld*, *-nd*, and *-rd*, see § 270.

### 3. THE VOCALIZATION OF CONSONANTS.

§ 240. The prefix *ȝe-* became *i-* through the intermediate stages *ī-*, *ȝī-*, which remained initially (also written *y-*), as *iwis ywis* (OE. *gewiss*) *certain*, *iclad yclad* *clothed*, but disappeared medially through the intermediate stage *-e-*, as *neighbour*, older *nehhebour* (OE. *nēahgebūr*), see § 153. Medial palatal *ȝ* became *i* between *r* and a following vowel, as *burie(n)* *birie(n)* (OE. *byrgan*) *to bury*, *murie mirie* (OE. *myr(i)ge*) *pleasant*, *terie(n)* (OE. *tergan*) *to annoy*, and similarly in French words, *carie(n)*, *contrarie*, *marie(n)*, *studie(n)*. Palatal *ȝ* became vocalized to *i* after vowels and then combined with a preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *i*-type, see §§ 105, 299.

§ 241. When *w* came to stand finally after consonants it became vocalized to *u*, as pl. *ȝarwe* (OE. *gearwe*) from

which was formed a new sing. *ʒaru ready*, and similarly *holu hollow*, *naru narrow*, &c., see § 134 (a). Postvocalic old *w* became vocalized to *u*, and then combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *u*-type, as *chewen* (OE. *cēowan*) to *chew*, *knōwen* (OE. *cnāwan*) to *know*, *schewen* (OE. *scēawian*, later *sceāwian*) to *show*, beside northern *chēu* (*chēu*), *knau*, *schēu*, see §§ 110, 2, 111. And in like manner *w* from OE. and early ME. guttural *ʒ* became vocalized to *u* after a guttural vowel and then combined with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong of the *u*-type, see §§ 105, 298.

§ 242. *v* was vocalized to *u* (generally written *w*) when it stood or came to stand before a consonant through the loss of a medial unaccented vowel (§ 153), as *awkward* from older *\*avkward* (ON. *avaktþwart*), pl. *chaules* (OE. *cēaflas*) from which was formed a new singular *chaul check*, *crawlen* (ON. *krafla*) to *crawl*, *ewte* older *evete* (OE. *efete*) *newt*, pl. *hawkes* (OE. *hafocas*) from which a new singular *hawk* was formed, *nauger* older *naveger* (OE. *nafogār*) *auger*.

#### 4. ASSIMILATION.

§ 243. Partial or total assimilation of dentals took place in unaccented particles, as *and* *tat* = *and pat*, *atte* = *at þe*, *patte* = *pat þe*. *ln* became *ll*, as *elle* older *elne* (OE. *eln*) *ell*, *mille* older *milne* (OE. *myln*). *fm* became *mm*, as *lemman* (OE. *lēofman*) *sweetheart*, *wimman* (OE. *wimman* beside *wifman*) *woman*. *n* became *m* before *f* and *p*, as *comfort* (O.Fr. *confort*), *hemp* (OE. *henep*), *noumpere* (O.Fr. *nonper*) *umpire*. *pf* became *ff*, as *chaffare* (OE. *\*cēapfaru*) *trade*.

#### 5. METATHESIS.

§ 244. The metathesis of *r* was common in OE., especially in the Northumbrian dialect. Already at that period ante-

vocalic *r* often became postvocalic when a short vowel *v* followed by *n*, *nn*, *s* or *s*+consonant (*EOE. Gr.* § 14 ME. examples are: *bird* (OE. *brid*), *briht* (OE. *beor bright*, *hors* (OE. *hros*), *þirde* (OE. *þrida*); *asken bes axen* = OE. *āscian* beside *āxian* to *ask*.

## 6. THE LOSS OF CONSONANTS.

§ 245. Postconsonantal *w* disappeared before back-round vowels, as *alsō*, *ase* (OE. *ealswā*), *sō* (OE. *swā*), *soche* *suc* beside *swich* (OE. *swylc*), *sord* beside *sword*, *sōte* beside *swōte* *sweet* adv., *tō* beside *twō* (OE. *twā*), *þong* beside *þwong*, *hō* beside *whō* (OE. *hwā*). It also disappeared in certain verbal forms with the negative prefix, as *nas* (OE. *næs* = *ne wæs*) *was not*, *nille* (OE. *nille* = *ne wille*) *w. not*, and similarly *niste* *I knew not*, *nōt* *I know not*, *nold* *I would not*, &c.

§ 246. *l* disappeared in the Midland and southern dialect before and after *ch* = OE. palatal *c*, as *ēch* (OE. *ælc*) *each*, *much* *moche*, *miche* (OE. *mycel*) *great*, *such* *soche* beside *swich* (OE. *swylc*), *which* *whuch* (OE. *hwylc*) beside northern *ilk*, *mikel*, *swilk*, *quilk*. It also disappeared in the unaccented particle *ase* beside the accented form *alsō* (OE. *ealswā*).

§ 247. Final *-n* disappeared early in dissyllabic and trisyllabic nouns and adjectives in the Midland and southern dialects, but was often or generally restored again from the inflected forms, as *kinrēde*, *kindred* (OE. *cyn-ræden*), *ēve* beside *ēven* *evening*, *maide(n)*. It had disappeared in Northumbrian during the OE. period in words of more than one syllable. This law was fairly well preserved in the infinitive, the present and preterite plural subjunctive, the weak declension of nouns and adjectives, numerals and adverbs, but in strong nouns and adjectives including the past participles of strong verbs, the final *-n* was generally reintroduced into the nom. singular from the inflected forms. It was

also mostly reintroduced into the pret. indicative plural through the influence of the past participle, which itself was a new formation.

In early ME. the final **-n** disappeared in unaccented syllables except in the pp. of strong verbs in the northern dialects. In the Midland dialects it was mostly retained, especially in the present plural of the indicative, the infinitive, and the past participle of strong verbs. It was retained in the southern dialects in the weak declension of nouns and adjectives, whereas in the Kentish dialect it disappeared at an early period in the past participle of strong verbs, see § 147. Final **-n** disappeared in the indefinite article and the possessive pronouns when the next word began with a consonant, as *ā, ȝ þing* (OE. *ān*), *nȝ þing* (OE. *nān*), *mī fader* (OE. *mīn*). When the next word began with a vowel the **-n** was run on to it, as *mī nēm* (OE. *mīn ēam*) *my uncle*.

§ 248. **f** disappeared in O.Fr. before final **-s**, as nom. sing. *baillis* beside acc. *baillif*, whence ME. *bailli* beside *baillif*, *joli* beside *jolif*, *pensi* beside *pensif* *thoughtful*. The forms *baily* and *pensy* are still very common in the modern dialects. **v** from older **f** also disappeared before consonants, as *hēd* beside older *hēved* (OE. *hēafod*) *head*, *lādi* from older *lavdie*, *lavedie* (OE. *hlæfdige*) *lady*, *lōrd* from older *lōverd* (OE. *hlāford*, *-ard*) *lord*. The common forms *þar I need*, *þarst*, *þar*, beside *þarf*, *þarft*, *þarf* were due to association with *dar I dare*, *darst*, *dar*.

§ 249. **t** disappeared before **st**, between **s** and **s** or **m**, as *best* (OE. *bet(e)st*), *laste* (OE. *latost*) *last*, *Wessex* (OE. *West-Seaxan*), *blosme* (OE. *blōstma* beside *blōsma*) *blossom*. **d** disappeared before **s**, as *answere* (OE. *and-swaru*), *gospel* beside older *godspel*, *gossib* beside older *godsib*. **þ** disappeared at the end of the first element of compounds, as *Norfolk* (OE. *Norþ-folc*), *Sussex* (OE. *Sūp-seaxan*). It also disappeared in the medial combinations

·þn-, ·þr- with lengthening of the preceding vowel, as *hēn* (ON. *heþan*) *hence*, *sīn*, *sēn* (OE. *sippan*, *sioppan*) *since*, *þēn* (ON. *þeþan*) *thence*, *whēr* *whether*, see § 76.

§ 250. Intervocalic *k* disappeared in the preterite and past participle *māde*, *mād* (*maad*) for older *mākede*, *māked*. From the pret. and pp. was then formed a new present *mā(n)* in the northern and north Midland dialects, after the analogy of which was also formed a new present *tā(n)* for *taken*, see § 79, note 1. Final -ch disappeared in unaccented words and syllables in late ME., as *I* beside *ich*, -ly beside older -liche, as in *hevenly* beside *hevenliche*. Initial *h* disappeared before *l*, *n*, *r*, but these combinations were often written *lh*, *nh*, *rh*, in early ME., especially in Kentish, as *lēpen* (OE. *hlēapan*) *to leap*, *lauzen* (Anglian *hlæhha(n)*) *to laugh*, *neien* (OE. *hnægan*) *to neigh*, *nute* (OE. *hnutu*) *nut*, *rāven* (OE. *hræfn*), *ring* (OE. *hring*).

#### 7. THE DEVELOPMENT OF GLIDE CONSONANTS IN ME.

§ 251. Glide consonants were developed, especially in the neighbourhood of nasals and *s*.

A *b* was developed between *m-l*, *m-r*, as *bremble* (OE. *brēmel*, gen. *brēmles*) *bramble*, *schamble* (OE. *sceamol*, gen. *sceam(o)les*), *pimble* (OE. *þȳmel*, gen. *þȳmles*), *slumbren* (OE. *slūmerian*), and also after *m* in *croumbe* (OE. *crūma*) *crumb*, *poumbe* (OE. *pūma*) *thumb*. A *p* was developed between *m-n*, *m-t*, as *nempnen* (OE. *nemnan*) *to name*, *empti* (OE. *æmtig*), and in French words like *autumpne* *autumn*, *dampnen* *to damn*, *solempne* *solemn*, *tempten* *to attempt*.

A *d* was developed between *l-n*, *n-r*, as *alder* (OE. *alr*, *alor*) *alder*, *þe alderbeste* (OE. *ealra betsta*) *the best of all*, and similarly *alderfirst*, *alderlast*, *kindred* (OE. *cyn-ræden*), *þunder* (OE. *þunor*, gen. *þun(o)res*). *jaundice* beside *jaunice* (AN. *jaunisse*). A final -*t* was developed after *n* in AN. words, as *auncient* (O.Fr. *ancien*), and

similarly fesaunt, tiraunt, ribant (riband) beside riban *ribbon*. A *t* was developed between *s* and *n* in glistnen (OE. glisnian), listnen (OE. hlýsnan) *to listen*, and after final *-s*, as aʒainest beside older aʒaines, bihēste (OE. behāes) *vow, promise*.

#### THE SEMIVOWELS.

##### W

§ 252. OE. *ƿ* was still used occasionally until the thirteenth century, but in early ME. *w* was generally written *uu*, more rarely *vv*, and in northern manuscripts *u* after dentals and *s*. In late northern manuscripts it was often written *v*. *w* was introduced from the AN. alphabet in the thirteenth century, and OE. *cw* came to be written *qu*.

§ 253. OE. *w* remained initially before vowels, and generally also initially before and after consonants, as *warm* (OE. *wearm*), *weder* (OE. *weder*) *weather*, *wlanc* (OE. *wlanc*) *proud*, *writen* (OE. *writan*), *twelf* (OE. *twelf*), and similarly *was*, *water*, *wēpen* *to weep*, *wīde*, *winter*, *wischen*, *wolf*, *wounde*, *wunder*; *wlite* *face, form*, *wrecche* *wretched*; *dwellen*, *swimmen*, *twig*; *quēne* (OE. *cwēn*) *queen, woman*, *quik* (OE. *cwic*).

It also remained medially after consonants, as *wid(e)we* (OE. *wid(e)we*) *widow*, *medwe* beside *mēde* (OE. gen. *mædwe* beside nom. *mæd*) *meadow*, and similarly *holwe* *hollow*, *schadwe*, *swalwe*. For the vocalization and loss of *w* see §§ 241, 245.

§ 254. AN. *w* (= O.Fr. *gu*, later *g*, in words of Germanic origin) remained in ME., as *rewarden*, *wāge*, *waiten*, *wāsten*, *werre* *war*.

The O.Fr. combination *qu* = *kw* remained in ME. before *a*, *e*, *i*, but became *k* (c) before *o*, *u*, as *equal*, *qualitee*, *quarter*, *questioun*; but *coi*, *likour*.



## Germanic j

§ 255. Germanic initial j had become a palatal spirant like the y in NE. *yet, you* in the oldest period of the language. This explains why it was written g in OE., and ȝ, later y, in ME., see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 150-1. The OE. sound remained initially in ME., as ȝē (OE. gē) *ye*, ȝēr ȝēr (OE. gēar, gēr) *year*, and similarly ȝet ȝit *yet*, ȝif *if*, ȝok ȝōke *yoke*, ȝong *young*, ȝoupe *youth*. See § 240.

## THE LIQUIDS.

## 1

§ 256. OE. and AN. l generally remained in all positions of the word, as loud (OE. hlūd), fallen (OE. feallan), āle (OE. ealu), clēne (OE. clāne), all (OE. eall), dēl (OE. dæl), and similarly lamb, lēpen, litel, loven; fillen, sellen, tellen, wolle; blōd, flesch, folk, glād, helpen, milk, nēdle, sōule, silver, stēlen; foul, full, sadel; labour, langāge; blāmen, calme, delai, failen, tāble; crūel. For the loss of l see § 246.

## r

§ 257. OE. and AN. r generally remained in all positions of the word, as roum (OE. rūm), bringen (OE. bringan), bēren (OE. beran), hard (OE. heard), sterre (OE. steorra) *star*, fader (OE. fæder), and similarly rēd *red*, rein *rain*, rīden; arm, bāre, erpe *earth*, ferre *far*, grēne, sprēden, strēm *stream*, trē, word, wrīten; better, fȳr *fire*, mōder; rāge, round; chaumbre, fōrce, grāce, natūre, trouble; pūr. For the metathesis of r see § 244.

## THE NASALS.

## m

§ 258. OE. and AN. m generally remained in ME., as mōder (OE. mōdor) *mother*, clīmben (OE. clīmban), nāme

(OE. *nama*), *roum* (OE. *rūm*), and similarly *māken*, *man*, *mīn*, *mouþ*; *cōmb*, *cumen*, *swimmen*, *time*; *brōm*, *worm*, *helm*; *maladie*, *moneie*; *chaumbre*, *damāge*, *lampe*.

§ 259. Final *-m*, when an element of inflexion, became *-n* in late OE., as dat. pl. *ðagon*, *giefon*, *sunon* beside older *dagum*, *giefum*, *sunum*; dat. sing. and pl. *gōdon* beside older *gōdum*. The *-n* disappeared at an early period in ME. The old ending with *-m* was preserved in the ME. isolated form *whilom*, the dat. pl. of OE. *hwīl time*, used adverbially.

## n

§ 260. OE. and AN. dental *n* generally remained, as *nāme* (OE. *nama*), *biginnen* (OE. *beginnan*), *sune* (OE. *sunu*) *son*, *stōn* *stone*, and similarly *nēdle*, *niȝt*; *gnawen* *to gnaw*, *grēne*, *henne*, *hound*, *knē*, *land*, *quēne*, *senden*, *sunne* *sun*; *chin*, *toun*; *natūre*, *nōble*, *nōise*; *aunte*, *chaunce*, *point*; *baroun*, *vain*. For the loss of final *-n* see § 247.

## ɲ

§ 261. OE. and AN. guttural *ɲ* (written *n*) remained, as *bringen* (OE. *bringan*), *singen*, pret. pl. *sungen* (OE. *singan*, *sungon*), *tunge* (OE. *tunge*), and similarly *drinken*, *finger*, *king*, *lang* *long*, *þanken*; *anguische*, *frank*, *langāge*, &c.

§ 262. OE. palatal *ɲc* (§ 286) and *ɲg* (§ 294) became *ntš* (written *nch*) and *ndž* (written *ng*), as *benche* (OE. *benc*), *finch* (OE. *finc*), *þenchen* (OE. *þencan*) *to think*; *sengen* *singen* (OE. *sengean*) *to singe*.

§ 263. In many dialects the OE. palatal combinations *enc*, *eng* became *ein* before *d*, *t*, *þ* with *i* to indicate the palatal nature of the *n*, the *ei* then later became *e*, as pret. *meinde* (OE. *mengde*) *he mixed*, *dreinte* (OE. *drencte*) *he drowned*, *leinten*, later *lenten* (OE. *lengten*, *lencten*)

*spring, Lent, leinþe, lenþe* (OE. *lengþu*), *streinþe, strenþe* (OE. *strengþu*). The forms *lenþ strenþ* are still the usual forms in all the dialects of Scotland and the northern counties.

## THE LABIALS.

## p

§ 264. OE. and AN. *p* generally remained in all positions of the word, as *paþ* (OE. *pæþ*), *slēpen slēpen* (OE. *slāpan, slēpan*), *dēp* (OE. *dēop*), and similarly *peni, pleien to play, pound, prēst, proud; cuppe, harpe, helpen, lippe, spēken, steppen, wēpen to weep; pret. halp, schip; part, plēsen to please, present; lampe, purple, spāce.*

## b

§ 265. OE. and AN. *b* generally remained in all positions of the word, as *bēren* (OE. *beran*), *brēken* (OE. *brecan*), *ribbe* (OE. *ribb*), *web* (OE. *webb*), and similarly *baþ, binden, blak, bōn, bringen; clīmben, clubbe, ebbe, webbe female weaver; cōmb, doumb dumb, gossib; bēst, blāmen, boilen; chaumbre, labour, membre, tāble.*

ME. *hāven to have, hēven to raise, heave, liven* beside OE. *habban, hebban, libban* were new formations made from the present second and third pers. singular *hafast, hafap, &c.*

## f

§ 266. OE. medial and final *f* had a twofold origin and a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 157-8.

1. Medially in combination with voiceless sounds, and finally, it was pronounced like NE. *f*, and corresponded to Germanic *f* and *f*, as *wīf* (= OHG. *wīb*, NHG. *weib*), *wulf* (= OHG. *wolf*).

2. Medially between voiced sounds it was pronounced like the *v* in NE. *vine, five*, and corresponded to Germanic *f*

and *f*, as *giefan* (OHG. *geban*), pl. *wulfas* (OHG. *wolfa*). In early ME. the OE. voiced *f* was generally written *u* (rarely *v*). In the Scottish and northern dialects *w* was sometimes written for *v* in AN. words, as *wertu*, *trawail*.

#### 1. OE. Voiceless *f*.

§ 267. OE. initial and final *f*, and *f* in combination with voiceless sounds, remained, as *fader* (OE. *fæder*), *dēf* (OE. *dēaf*) *deaf*, *fif* (OE. *fif*) *five*, *after* (OE. *æfter*), and similarly *ferre far*, *finden*, *flȳen* *to fly*, *folk*, *frēsen* *to freeze*, *full*; *calf*, *lēf leaf*, *turf*, *twelf*; *gift*, *offren*; also in AN. words, as *fāce*, *frut* (fruit); *brēf brief*, *strif*. Forms like *five* beside *fif*, *grāve* beside OE. *græf*, *twelve* beside older *twelf* were new formations from the inflected forms. For the voicing of initial *f* in Kentish and the southern dialects see § 236.

#### 2. OE. Medial *f* = *v*.

§ 268. OE. medial *f* = *v* generally remained, as *driven* (OE. *drifan*), *havest*, *haveþ* (OE. *hafast*, *hafap*), and similarly *bēver*, *given* (*ȝiven*), *heven*, *knāve*, *loven*, *rāven*, *seven*, *sterven* *to die*, *wēven*; also in AN. words, as *valour*, *verai*; *availen*, *avengen*, *serven*. *f* from older *v* disappeared in the unaccented forms *hast*, *hap* beside the accented forms *havest*, *haveþ*. For other examples of the loss of *v* see § 248.

### THE DENTALS.

#### *t*

§ 269. OE. and AN. *t* generally remained in all positions of the word, as *tāle* (OE. *talū*), *tunge* (OE. *tunge*), *bīten* (OE. *bītan*), *setten* (OE. *settan*), *what* (OE. *hwæt*), and similarly *tāken*, *tellen*, *tīme*, *toun*, *trē*, *twig*; *better*, *ēten*, *fiȝten* *to fight*, *herte*, *resten*, *sitten*, *swēte*, *preterites* like *grette* *he greeted*, *kepte*, *slepte*; *fōt*, *mōst*, *nȝt* *night*; *tāble*, *tempest*; *douten* *to doubt*, *straunge*; *delit* *delight*.

NOTE.—1. *c*, *z* (also occasionally *ȝ*) were sometimes written for *ts*, as *blecen* (Orm *blettseenn*, OE. *bletsian*) to *bless*, *milze*, Orm *millce* (OE. *milts*) *mercy*.

2. In late ME. *th* was sometimes written for *t* in French words. as *autour* (O.Fr. *auteur*) later *authour*, *tēme* (O.Fr. *tesme*) later *thēme*, *trōne* (O.Fr. *trone*) later *thrōne*.

### d

§ 270. OE. and AN. *d* generally remained in all positions of the word, as *dai* (OE. *dæg*), *drinken* (OE. *drincan*), *bidden* (OE. *biddan*), *bīden* (OE. *bindan*), *fader* (OE. *fæder*), *dēd* (OE. *dēad*), and similarly *dēp*, *douȝter* *daughter*, *dwellen*; *bodi*, *bladder*, *finden*, *fōlden*, *sadel*, *punder*, *weder* *weather*, *wilde*; *bed*, *fēld*, *god*, *hard*, *land*, *ōld*, *word*; *dāme*, *daungēr*; *maladie*, *pardoun*; *round*. The *t* in the preterite and pp. of verbal stems ending in *-l*, *-ll*, *-ld*, *-rd*, *-m*, *-n*, *-nd* was due to the analogy of preterites and past participles like *kepte*, *kept*; *mette*, *met*; *kiste*, *kist*, where the *t* was regular, as *bilte* (OE. *bylde*), *bilt*; *dwelte*, *dwelt*; *felte*, *felt*; *girte*, *girt*; *dremte*, *dremt*; *blente*, *blent* *blended*, *sente*, *sent*. For the unvoicing of *d* see § 239.

### þ

§ 271. OE. *þ* had a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* § 139.

1. Initially, medially when doubled, and finally it was pronounced like the *th* in NE. *thin*.

2. Medially between voiced sounds it was pronounced like the *th* in NE. *then*.

In the fourteenth century *th* gradually came to be used beside *þ*, but the *þ* continued to be written beside *th*, especially initially, throughout the ME. period. In the best manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales* *th* is generally used.

1. Voiceless *p*.

§ 272. OE. voiceless *p* generally remained, as *ping* (OE. *ping*), *prēð prēð* (OE. *præð*) *thread*, *kippe* (OE. *cȳppu*) *kindred*, *dēþ* (OE. *dēaþ*) *death*, and similarly *panken*, *þenken* *pinken*, *þorn*; *wraþpe*; *baþ*, *mouþ*, *tōþ*. The pret. *quod* beside *quoþ* had *d* from the old plural. For the voicing of initial *p* in the Kentish and southern dialects, see § 236, and of final *-þ* in unaccented syllables, see § 237.

§ 273. *p* became *t* after voiceless spirants, as *drouzte* (OE. *drūgoþ*) *drought*, *heizte* (OE. *hiehþu*) *height*, *leste* (OE. *lȳ læs þe*) *lest*, *nosterl* beside older *nosþyril* *nostril*, *sizte* (OE. *gesihþ*) *sight*, *þefte* (OE. *þeofþ*, *þiefþ*) *theft*.

2. Voiced *p*.

§ 274. OE. voiced *p* generally remained, as *brōþer* (OE. *brōþor*), *leþer* (OE. *leþer*) *leather*, and similarly *bāþen*, *biquēþen*, *blīþe*, *faþem*, *hēþen* *heathen*, *ōþer*, *sēþen* *to scethe*, &c. The pret. *coude* beside *coupe* *could* was a new formation after the analogy of the other preterites in *-de*. For the unvoicing of *p* see § 238.

§ 275. *p* became *d* before and after liquids, as *aforden* beside older *aforþen* (OE. *geforþian*), *burdene* beside older *burþene* (OE. *byrþenn*), and similarly *fiddle*, *mordre* *murder*.

THE SIBILANT *s*.

§ 276. OE. *s* had a twofold pronunciation, see *EOE. Gr.* § 139.

1. It was voiceless initially, medially when doubled, and in combination with voiceless consonants, and finally. In ME. the letter *c* was sometimes used for *s* initially and in AN. words both initially and medially. *sc* was also sometimes written for *ss*, as *blescen* *bliscen* = *bleszen* *to bless*.

The OE. final *-s* which in ME. became voiced after voiced sounds in unaccented syllables (§ 237) was sometimes written *ȝ*, as *heggeȝ* *hedges*.

2. It was voiced (= *z*) medially between voiced sounds. In early ME. voiced *s* was only occasionally written *z*, but the *z* became more common in late ME.

#### 1. Voiceless *s*.

§ 277. OE. and AN. voiceless *s* generally remained, as *senden* (OE. *sendan*), *spēken* (OE. *specan*, older *sprecān*), *fist* (OE. *fȳst*), *kissen* (OE. *cyssan*), *hous* (OE. *hūs*), and similarly *sand*, *singen*, *slēpen*, *smal*, *sonne* *sun*, *standen*, *strong*, *swēte* *sweet*; *asken*, *asse*; *hors*, *mous*, *was*; *sāven*, *cēsen* *to cease*, *spāce*, *stout*; *deceiven*, *hōst*, *passen*; *cās* *case*, *pēs* *peace*. For the voicing of initial *s* in the Kentish and southern dialects, and of final *-s* in unaccented syllables, see §§ 236-7.

NOTE.—Initial *sl-* was sometimes written *scl-*, as *sclēpen*, *sclain*, *sclender* beside *slēpen*, *slain*, *slender*.

§ 278. AN. *-(i)ss-* became *-(i)sch-* in ME., as *punischen* (O.Fr. *punir*: *puniss-*), and similarly *anguische*, *cherischen*, *finischen*, *perischen*, &c.

#### 2. Voiced *s*.

§ 279. OE. and AN. voiced *s* remained, as *frēsen* (OE. *frēosan*) *to freeze*, *risen* (OE. *rīsan*), and similarly *bēsme* *besom*, *chēsen* *to choose*, *rōse*; *desir*, *plēsen*, *prisoun*, *visāge*, *visiten*, &c.

### THE GUTTURALS.

#### k

§ 280. Germanic *k* became differentiated into a guttural and a palatal *k* in OE., generally written *c* in both cases. For the cause of this differentiation see *EOE. Gr.* § 166.

## 1. OE. Guttural c.

§ 281. OE. guttural c remained in ME., and was generally written c before guttural vowels and l, r, and k before palatal vowels, n, and finally, and cw was generally written qu, as *kichene* (OE. *cycene*), *kissen* (OE. *cyssan*), *cōl* (OE. *cōl*) *cool*, *corn* (OE. *corn*), *cumen* (OE. *cuman*), *bāken* (OE. *bacan*), *sinken* (OE. *sincan*), *spēken* (OE. *specan*, older *sprecan*), *blak* (OE. *blæc*), *bōk* (OE. *bōc*), and similarly *biquēpen*, *can*, *keie* *key*, *kēne*, *kēpen*, *king*, *clēne*, *climben*, *knē*, *cōld*, *cōmb*, *craft*, *quēne*, *cou* *cow*, *cuppe*; *brēken*, *drinken*, *māken*, *stikke* *sticke*, *pikke* *picke*; *bak*, *dark*, *folk*, *milk*, *work*; also written c in AN. words, as *colour*, *commoun*, *doctour*, &c.

## 2. OE. Palatal c.

§ 282. There is still some difference of opinion among scholars about what was the normal development of the OE. palatal c in ME. Some scholars assume that it became assibilated to tš in the Midland and southern dialects some time during the OE. period, but that in the northern dialects the palatalization was given up and that consequently no assibilation took place. They explain the tš-forms in the northern dialects as being importations from the other dialects, and conversely the k-forms in the Midland and southern dialects as being importations from the northern dialects. This explanation can hardly be the correct one, because the tš-forms in the oldest records of the northern dialects are so numerous, and such common everyday words, that they cannot all have been importations from the other dialects, especially at such an early period. Other scholars assume that OE. palatal c became assibilated to tš in all the dialects (but see § 284), and that the k-forms in ME. and standard NE. are either Scandinavian words (cp. § 174) or are due to Scandinavian influence caused by the Scandinavian element of the population substituting the k-sound for the



tš with which they were unfamiliar, and that then some of these **k**-forms gradually spread beyond the Scandinavian area. This explanation is probably the correct one. It is also possible that forms like **penken** (OE. **pencan**) *to think*, **pinken** (OE. **pyncan**) *to seem*, **sēken** (OE. **sēcan**) *to seek*, beside **penchen**, **pinchen**, **sēchen** were new formations from the early OE. syncopated forms like **þencþ**, **pyncþ**, **sēcþ** (see *EOE. Gr.* § 319) with regular change from the palatal to the guttural **c**.

§ 283. In some southern texts **ch** was written for OE. palatal **c** in all positions as far back as the twelfth century. In the early ME. period the **tš** was written **ch**, and medially when doubled **cch**. Later it was written **tch** medially and finally. Examples are:—**chewen** (OE. **cēowan**) *to chew*, **child** (OE. **cild**), **chin** (OE. **cinn**), **chicken** (OE. **cicen**, gen. **cīcnes**), **fecchen** (OE. **feccean** beside **fetian**), **tēchen** (OE. **tācan**) *to teach*, **birche** (OE. **birce**), and similarly **chēke**, **chēp**, **cheris** *cherry*, **chēse**, **chīden**, **chile**; **kichene**, **strecchen**, **chirche**, **crucche**, **hevenliche**, **spēche**, **wicche** *witch*, **wrecche**; **dich**, **pich**.

NOTE.—In **kerven** (OE. **ceorfan**) *to carve* the **k** of the pret. pl. and pp. was levelled out into the present.

§ 284. Assibilation did not take place initially in the Anglian area before ME. **ā** from early OE. (Anglian) **æ** = WS. **ea**, as **caf** (Angl. **cæf**) : **chaf** (WS. **ceaf**) *chaff*, and similarly **calf** : **chalf**, **cāld** **cōld** : **chāld** **chēld** *cold*, **calk** : **chalk**.

§ 285. In a number of words **k**- and **ch**-forms exist side by side. The **k**-forms occur chiefly, but not exclusively, in the ME. period in those areas where Scandinavian influence was greatest, as **ic** **ik** : **ich** (OE. **ic**) *I*, **ilk** : **ēch** (OE. **ælc**) *each*, **lik** : **liche** (OE. **lic**) *like*, **mikel** : **miche** **much** (OE. **mycel**), **sēken** : **sēchen** (OE. **sēcan**), **swilk** : **siche** **suche** **swich** (OE. **swylc**), **penken** : **penchen** (OE. **pencan**) *to think*, **pinken** : **pinchen** (OE. **pyncan**) *to seem*, **quilk** : **which**

(OE. hwylc), *wirken* : *wirchen* (OE. *wyrcan*) *to work* (cp. § 282).

§ 286. Palatal *nc* became *ntš* (written *nch*), as *benche* (OE. *benc*), *penchen* (OE. *pencan*) *to think*, and similarly *finch*, *pinchen* *to seem*, *wenche*, see § 262.

§ 287. In many dialects the palatal combination *·enc·* became *·ein·* before *t*, with *i* to indicate the palatal nature of the combination, as *dreinte* (OE. *drencte*) *he drowned*, *leinten* later *lenten* (OE. *lengten*, *lencten*) *spring*, *Lent*, see § 263.

§ 288. AN. *ch* (= *tš*) remained in ME., as *chaumbre*, *charge*, *chaunce*; *achēven*, *prechen* *to preach*, *touchen*, &c.

#### sc

§ 289. In the oldest period of the language *sc*, like *k*, was guttural or palatal according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel (*EOE. Gr.* § 167), but some time during the OE. period the guttural *sc* became palatal, except in loan-words. *sc* became *š* in late OE. or early ME. In early ME. it was generally written *sch* or sometimes *sh* as in the *Ormulum*, also medially and finally *ssh*, *sch*, later *sh*, in the *Cursor Mundi* *sc*, and in Kentish *ss*. Examples are:—*schaft* (OE. *sceaft*), *schēld* (OE. *sciold*), *schilling* (OE. *scilling*), *waschen* (OE. *wascan*), *fisch* (OE. *fisc*), and similarly *schāde*, *schal*, *scharp*, *schēwen* *to show*, *schīnen*, *schort*; *asche*, *wischen*; *englisch*, *flesch*. For *sc* in loan-words see §§ 161, 175.

NOTE.—*sc-* became *s-* in the northern dialects in *sal shall*, *suld should*, which are still the usual forms in the modern northern dialects.

#### g, ȝ

§ 290. Germanic *ȝ* became *g* after *ɔ* during the prim. Germanic period. *ȝj* and *ȝn* became *gg* in West Germanic. Germanic *ȝ* remained a spirant in all other positions in the oldest period of OE. Germanic initial and medial *ȝ* became differentiated in prehistoric OE. into a guttural and a palatal

voiced spirant under the same conditions as those by which Germanic *k* became differentiated into a guttural and a palatal explosive, see *EOE. Gr.* § 168.

§ 291. Initial guttural *ɣ* remained in the oldest period of the language, but had become the voiced explosive *g* before the end of the OE. period. And then the *g* remained in ME., as *gaderen* (OE. *gaderian*) *to gather*, *gāte* (OE. pl. *gatu*), *glad* (OE. *glæd*), *gōd* (OE. *gōd*), *ground* (OE. *grund*), and similarly *gilden*, *gilt* *guilt*, *glōf* *glove*, *god*, *gōs*, *gnawen*, *gras*. AN. *g* remained in ME. both initially and medially, as *gai*, *grāce*, *tigre*, *vigour*.

§ 292. OE. initial palatal *ɣ* remained a spirant (= the *y* in NE. *yet*, *yon*) in ME., and was written *ɣ* later *y*, as *ɣaf* (OE. *geaf*) *he gave*, *ɣard*, *ɣerd* (OE. *geard*), *ɣēlden* (OE. *gieldan*) *to recompense*, and similarly *ɣellen*, *ɣelwe* *yellow*, *ɣernen*, *ɣesterdai*, *forɣēten* *forɣiten*. In OE. the guttural and palatal *ɣ* often existed side by side in different forms of the same word, and then at a later period one or other of the forms became generalized, as OE. pl. *gatu* beside sing. *geat*, whence ME. *gāte* beside *ɣat*, *ɣet* (cp. § 176). And similarly ME. *biginnen* had its *g* from the preterite and past participle. In a few words the English and Scandinavian forms existed side by side in ME., as *forɣēten* *forɣiten* (OE. *forgietan*) beside *gēten* (ON. *geta*), and similarly *ɣēven*, *ɣiven* beside *given*, northern *gif*, *ɣift* beside *gift*, see § 176.

§ 293. Initial *ɣi-* became *i-* (later written *y-*) through the intermediate stage *ī-*, as *icchen*, older *ɣicchen* (OE. *gicc(e)an*) *to itch*, *if* beside older *ɣif*. And similarly the OE. prefix *ge-* became *ɣi-* and then later *i-* (*y-*), see § 240, as *iwis* *ywis* (OE. *gewiss*) *certain*, *inɣuɣ* *ynɣuɣ* (OE. *genōg*, *genōh*) *enough*, and in past participles, as *islain*, *iclad*. This prefix of the pp. generally disappeared in the northern dialects and often also in the Midland.

§ 294. The *g* in the combination *ɲg* remained guttural or

became palatal in OE. according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel or *j* (*EOE. Gr.* § 168).

OE. guttural *ɔg* (written *ng*) remained in ME., as *bringen* (OE. *bringan*), *hunger* (OE. *hungor*), *lang long* (OE. *lang, long*), and similarly *England, finger, singen, tonge tunge; king, ring, ping*.

OE. palatal *ɔg* became assibilated to *ndž* (written *ng*) in late OE. or early ME., as *crengen* (OE. *\*creng(e)an*) to *cringe*, *sengen singen* (OE. *seng(e)an*) to *singe*.

§ 295. In many dialects the OE. palatal combination *-eɔg-* became *-ein-* before *d, þ* with *i* to denote the palatal nature of the *n*. The *ei* then later became *e*, as *pret. meinde* (OE. *mengde*) *he mixed*, *leinþe* later *lenþe* (OE. *lengþu*) *length*, *streinþe* later *strenþe* (OE. *strengþu*) *strength*, see § 263.

§ 296. West Germanic *gg* became differentiated into guttural *gg* and palatal *gg* in OE. under the same conditions as those by which Germanic *k* became differentiated into a guttural and palatal explosive.

OE. guttural *gg* remained in ME., as *dogge* (OE. *dogga*), and similarly *frogge, hogge, stagge*.

OE. palatal *gg* (written *cg*, often also *cge, cgi*) became assibilated to *dž* in late OE. or early ME., and was written *gge* later *dge*, as *brigge* (OE. *brycg*), *cuggele* (OE. *cycgel*), and similarly *egge, hegge, migge, rigge, wegge*. The southern dialects had the regular forms in the verbs, as *biggen bügen beggen* (OE. *bycgan*) to *buy*, *leggen* (OE. *lecg(e)an*) to *lay*, and similarly *liggen* to *lie down*, *seggen ziggen* to *say*, but *bȳen* to *buy*, *leien* to *lay*, *lȳen* to *lie down*, *seien sai* to *say*, in the Midland and northern dialects were new formations from the second and third pers. sing. of the present.

NOTE.—There is both in ME. and in the modern dialects of the northern, Midland and eastern counties a number of words with the explosive *g* where we should regularly expect *dž*, as *brig*,

*fligd fledged, lig to lie down, rig back, ridge, seg sedge.* The *g* in these words is no doubt due to Scandinavian influence as the forms only occur in those areas where that influence was strong, cp. § 285.

§ 297. The *dž* (written *j*, *g* initially and *g*, *gg* medially) remained in AN. words, as *cāge*, *chargen*; *generāl*, *joinen*, *juge*, *juggen*, *plege* *plegge*.

§ 298. OE. medial guttural ɣ (written *g*) remained in early ME. after guttural vowels and liquids, but became vocalized to *u*-consonant (written *w*) before the end of the twelfth century, and then the *w* combined with a preceding guttural vowel to form a diphthong of the *u*-type, but *ū* (written *ou*, *ow*) if the preceding vowel was *ū*, as *dražen*, *drawen* (OE. *dragan*) *to draw*, *haže*, *hawe* (OE. *hagu*) *haw*, see § 110, 8; *āžen*, *awe*, *qwen* (OE. *āgan*) *to possess*, see § 110, 4 and § 113, 3; *bqže*, *bque* *bqwe* (OE. *boga*) *bow*, pl. *trqzes*, *trqwes* (OE. *trogas*) *troughs*, see § 113, 2; pl. *bqžes*, *bqwes* (OE. *bōgas*) *boughs*, *drqžen*, *drqwen* (OE. *drōgon*) *they drew*, see § 114, 2 (*b*); *fūžel*, *fūel*, *fou(e)l* (OE. *fugol*) *bird*, *fowl*, see § 122, 5; *būžen*, *būen*, *bouen* *bowen* (OE. *būgan*) *to bend*, see § 122, 6; *folžen*, *folwen* (OE. *folgian*) *to follow*, *halžen*, *halwen* (OE. *hālgian*) *to hallow*, *moržen*, *morwe(n)* (OE. *morgen*) *morning*, *morrow*, *sorže*, *sorwe* (OE. *sorh*, *sorg*, gen. *sorge*) *sorrow*, *swelžen*, *swelwen*, *swolwen* (OE. *swelgen*) *to swallow*.

§ 299. The vocalization of palatal ɟ to *i*-consonant took place already in late OE. after palatal vowels finally and before consonants, and in early ME. also medially between vowels, and then the *i*-consonant combined with a preceding palatal vowel to form a diphthong of the *i*-type, but *ī* if the preceding vowel was *ī*, as *mai* (OE. *mæg*, later *mæi*) *he may*, *māžen*, *main* (OE. *māgen*) *power*, *saide* (OE. *sægde*) *he said*, see § 106; *wei* (OE. *weg*, later *wei*) *way*, *pležen*, *pleien* (OE. *plegian*) *to play*, see § 107, 1; *clei* (OE. *clāg*) *clay*, pret. pl. *leien* (OE. *lāgon*) *they lay*, see § 107, 5;

dēȝen, deien, dien (late OE. dēġian) to *dye*, ēȝe, eie, ȝe (late OE. ēġe) *eye*, flēȝen, fleien, flȝen (late OE. flēġan, earlier flēogan) to *fly*, see § 107, 6; stiȝele, stile (OE. stigel) *style*, see § 122, 1; stīȝen, stien (OE. stīġan) to *ascend*, see § 122, 2.

For the vocalization of OE. final -ig in unaccented syllables and of g between r and a following vowel see §§ 138, 240.

## h

§ 300. OE. initial h (except in the combination hw) was an aspirate like the h in NE. *hand*, but with a strong emission of breath between the h and the following vowel or consonant. Initial hw was pronounced χw, like the wh in many modern Scottish dialects. In all other positions h, including hh, was a guttural or a palatal spirant according as it was originally followed by a guttural or a palatal vowel or j, cp. *EOE. Gr.* §§ 166, 174.

§ 301. OE. initial h remained in ME. before vowels, as hous (OE. hūs), hēlen (OE. hēlan) to *heal*, and similarly hām, hōm *home*, hand hond, hard, hāre *hare*, helpen, herte *heart*, hound.

§ 302. AN. initial h was not pronounced, and accordingly it was often omitted in the writing of such loan-words as habit abit, hāste āste, heire eire *heir*, honest onest, honour onour, houre oure *hour*.

§ 303. OE. hw came to be written qu, qv, quh in the northern dialects, especially the Scottish, and wh in the Midland and southern dialects. This difference in the spelling indicates that the χ in χw was pronounced with greater force in the northern than in the other dialects, and it is also attested by the modern dialects which have χw in the former, but w in the latter, see *ED. Gr.* § 240. Examples are: what : quat qvat quhat (OE. hwæt),

whō whō: quā qvā quhā (OE. hwā), and similarly whīle, white, &c.

§ 304. Initial h- disappeared before l, n, r, but these combinations were often written lh, nh, rh in early ME., especially in Kentish, as lēpen (OE. hlēapan) *to leap*, nute (OE. hnutu) *nut*, ring (OE. hring), and similarly ladder, lauzen *to laugh*, lid, lōf *loaf*, lot, neien *to neigh*, rāven, &c.

§ 305. Medial and final hs (= xs) had become ks (written x) in the oldest period of the language, as waxen (OE. weaxan, Goth. wahsjan) *to grow*, six (OE. siex, six, Goth. saifs) *six*, and similarly, flax, fox, oxe, &c.

§ 306. Intervocalic h (= Germanic x) disappeared in the prehistoric period of the language (EOE. Gr. § 144). OE. medial hh was simplified to h in ME. and was written ʒ, ʒh, gh, hʒ, &c., as lauzen laughen (Anglian hlæhha(n)) beside liʒhen lihʒen leiʒhen (early WS. hliehhan, later hlihhan, hlyhhan) *to laugh*, cōuzen cōughen (OE. cohhet-tan) *to cough*.

§ 307. The h in the OE. combination ht was guttural or palatal according as it was preceded by a guttural or a palatal vowel, and this distinction was generally preserved in ME., see §§ 107, 4; 110, 5, 6; 113, 4, 5. In ME. the ht was generally written ʒt, ʒht, ght, rarely ct. Examples are: dōuzter doughter (OE. dohtor) *daughter*, pp. fouʒten foughten (OE. fohten) *fought*, pret. bōuzte boughthe *he bought*, pp. bōuzt boughht (OE. bohte, boht), and similarly brōuzte, brōuzt; sōuzte, sōuzt; wrōuzte, wrōuzt. auʒt aught, aʒt aght (OE. āht) *ought, anything*, pret. teiʒte teighte (OE. tæhte) beside tauʒte, taʒte, Orm tahhte (OE. tæhte) *he taught*, pret. fauʒt, faʒt (late Anglian fæht) beside feiʒt (late WS. feht) *he fought*, auʒte aughte, aʒte aghte (late Anglian æhta) beside eiʒte eighte (late WS. ehta) *eight*, and similarly lauʒter laughter, slauʒter slaughter, strauʒe straughte *he stretched*. feiʒten feighten older

fehten beside fiȝten (Orm fihhten) to *fight*. For examples of late OE. *i* + *ht* see § 46.

§ 308. OE. post-vocalic final *-h*, which was guttural or palatal according as it was preceded by a guttural or a palatal vowel, remained in ME. and was written *h*, *ȝ*, *ȝh*, *gh*, and occasionally *c*, *g*, see §§ 107, 4; 109; 110, 5; 113, 4; and 114, 115. Examples are: *dāȝ* *dāgh*, *douȝ* *dough* (OE. *dāh*, *dāg*) *dough*, pret. *sauȝ* *saugh*, *saȝ* *sagh* (late Anglian *sæh*) beside *seiȝ* *seigh* (late WS. *seh*) *he saw*. *trouȝ* *trough* (OE. *troh*, *trog*) *trough*. *bouȝ* *bough* later *bouȝ* *bough* (OE. *bōh*) *bough* (§ 114, 2), and similarly *inoȝ* *inough*, *plouȝ* *plough*, *þouȝ* *þough* *though*. *heiȝ* *heigh* beside *hīȝ* *hīgh* (late OE. *hēh*) *high*, *peiȝ* *peigh* beside *pīȝ* *pīgh* (late OE. *pēh*) *thigh*. ME. *fē* *cattle*, *money* beside *feh* *feiȝ* (OE. *feoh*, gen. *fēos*) was a new formation from the inflected forms where intervocalic *h* regularly disappeared (*EOE. Gr.* § 144), and similarly *schō* (OE. *scōh*, gen. *scōs*) *shoe*.

§ 309. OE. final *-h* after liquids generally remained in ME., as *þurh* *purȝ* (OE. *þurh*) *through*, cp. § 241. Forms like *holu* *hollow* beside *holȝ* (OE. *holh*, gen. *holwes*) were new formations from the inflected forms, and similarly with forms like *sēle* (OE. *seolh*, gen. *sēoles*) *a seal* (cp. § 134 (*a*)).



# ACCIDENCE

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DECLENSION OF NOUNS

✓ § 310. ME. nouns have two numbers: singular and plural; three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter; four cases: nominative, accusative, genitive, and dative. The vocative is like the nominative, as in OE.

§ 311. In ME. as in OE. nouns are divided into two great classes, according as the stem originally ended in a vowel or a consonant. Nouns whose stems originally ended in a vowel belong to the vocalic or so-called strong declension. Those whose stems originally ended in *-n* belong to the so-called weak or *n*-declension. All other consonantal stems are generally put together under the general heading 'Minor Declensions'.

§ 312. In OE. nouns whose stems originally ended in a vowel are subdivided into four declensions. The first or *a*-declension comprises masculine and neuter nouns only, and includes pure *a*-stems, *ja*-stems, and *wa*-stems. The second or *ō*-declension contains feminine nouns only, and includes pure *ō*-stems, *jō*-stems, and *wō*-stems. The third or *i*-declension comprises masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. The fourth or *u*-declension comprises masculine and feminine nouns only. The neuter nouns of the *a*-declension had the same case-endings in the singular and plural as the masculine, except that the nominative and accusative plural of the neuter nouns ended in *-u* (*-o*) or

had no ending, and the masculine nouns ended in *-as*. In the plural the genitive had the ending *-a* (*-en-a*) and the dative the ending *-um* in all four declensions.

§ 313. These declensions underwent such radical changes in passing from OE. to ME. that in ME. it is no longer practicable to classify the strong declension of nouns according to the vowels in which the stems originally ended. We shall therefore adopt the plan of subdividing it into three declensions according to the gender of the nouns in OE., viz. (1) the declension of masculine nouns, (2) the declension of neuter nouns, and (3) the declension of feminine nouns. The chief cause of the breaking up of the OE. system of the declension of nouns was that in passing from OE. to ME. all the OE. vowels of the case-endings were weakened to *e* (§ 134). The result of this weakening of all vowels to *e* was that many different case-endings fell together, and that in some instances different declensions fell entirely together, e.g. the feminine *ō-* and *u-*declensions, the declension of the masculine and feminine weak nouns.

§ 314. With this weakening of all the vowels to *e* is also closely connected the loss of grammatical gender in nouns, which was partly due to the breaking up of the old declensions themselves, and partly to the weakening or loss of the inflexional endings in the definite article, the demonstrative pronouns, and the adjectives. It was in a great measure due to the changes which these latter parts of speech underwent in late OE. and early ME. that grammatical gender had become lost in all the dialects by about the end of the fourteenth century; cp. the opposite process in MHG. and NHG., where grammatical gender has been mainly preserved through the preservation of the inflexional endings in these parts of speech. This loss of grammatical gender did not take place concurrently in all the dialects. The process began much earlier in the northern than in the other dialects. Even in the OE. period both the gender and

declension of nouns fluctuated considerably in the Northumbrian as compared with the other dialects. It had almost entirely disappeared in the Midland dialects by the end of the twelfth or early part of the thirteenth century, in the south-western dialects by the middle of the thirteenth century, and in the south-eastern dialects, including Kentish, in the latter part of the fourteenth century.

§ 315. One of the most characteristic differences between OE. and ME. is the breaking up of the old system of declensions, the substitution of natural for grammatical gender, and the gradual spreading of the endings of the genitive singular and of the nominative and accusative plural of the old masculine *a*-declension to the types of nouns which did not regularly have these endings in OE., viz. to the *ō*-stems, the feminine and neuter *i*-stems, the *u*-stems, the *n*-stems, most of the other old consonant stems, and the plural of the old neuter *a*-stems. Some of these changes began to take place during the late OE. period, especially in Northumbrian. Even at that early period the plural ending *-as* of the masculine *a*- and *i*-declensions was often extended to the neuter *a*-stems, the masculine short *u*-stems, and the masculine nouns belonging to the 'Minor Declensions', and in late Northumbrian it also began to be extended to the feminine *ō*- and *i*-stems as well as to the *n*-stems after the loss of the final *-n* in the tenth century. In late OE. the plural ending in *-en* (*-an*) was sometimes even extended to old strong nouns. This was especially common in the southern dialects.

§ 316. This gradual extension of the *s*-plural was continued during the ME. period until it eventually became general for all classes of nouns except a few old neuter *a*-stems (§ 331), and mutated plurals like *fēt*, *men* (§ 346), but this radical change in the formation of the plural did not take place at the same pace in all the dialects. In the northern and north Midland dialects it had spread to all classes of nouns by the end of the twelfth century. In the south Midland dialects it

had become the general rule from about 1250 for strong nouns of all genders, and often also for weak nouns. Many weak nouns, however, preserved the old plural ending in *-n*, which was also sometimes extended to the strong nouns, but by the time of Chaucer the *s*-plural had with few exceptions been extended to all classes of nouns. In the southern dialects the history of the formation of the plural was somewhat different from that in the other dialects. The neuter nouns of the *a*-declension took the plural ending *-es* in early ME., but strong feminines and the masculine short *i*- and *u*-stems gradually took the *n*-plural after the analogy of the weak nouns. During the thirteenth century the reverse process set in, and from then onwards the *s*-plural gradually encroached upon the *n*-plural and through the loss of the final *-e-n* towards the end of the fourteenth century it rapidly gained ground until in the fifteenth century it became general for all classes of nouns.

§ 317. In OE. the *a*- and the masculine and neuter *i*-stems regularly had the ending *-es* in the genitive singular, but the *ō*- and feminine *i*-stems had *-e*, the *u*-stems *-a*, and the *n*-stems *-an*, which became weakened down to *-e*, *-en* in early ME. (§ 134). Parallel with the gradual extension of the *s*-plural to all classes of nouns also went that of the genitive ending *-es*, but genitives without *-(e)s* in those types of nouns which did not have it in OE. are occasionally found throughout the ME. period, and a few such genitives are still preserved in NE., as *Friday*, *Lady day* beside *Thursday*, *the Lord's day*. The *e* in *-es* was generally written, but not pronounced after secondary accented syllables of trisyllabic forms, as *felawes*, *housbondes*, *bodies*, *ladies*, &c.

§ 318. During the ME. period the preposition *of* came to be used before the nominative and accusative singular to express the genitival relationship, and similarly the preposition *to* to express the dative.

§ 319. The nominative and accusative plural were always

alike in OE. and so also in ME. In OE. the genitive plural of all strong nouns, of whatever gender, ended in *-a* (= ME. *-e*), except the pure *ō*-stems which had *-ena* (= ME. *-ene*) beside *-a*. The genitive plural of weak nouns ended in *-ena* (= ME. *-ene*). And the dative plural of all nouns, of whatever gender and declension, ended in *-um* (= ME. *-en*). The endings *-ene* and *-en* remained for a time in ME. in those nouns which had the weak ending *-en* (= OE. *-an*) in the nominative and accusative plural. But in those nouns where *-(e)s* had come to be used for the nominative and accusative plural, the *-(e)s* was gradually extended to the genitive and dative, that is to say the nominative and accusative came to be used for the genitive and dative.

§ 320. Trisyllabic inflected forms with *-el-*, *-en-*, *-er-* generally syncopated the medial *-e-*, as *foules*, *apples*, *wintres*, *fingres*, *fadres*, *mōdres* (cp. § 102). But when the medial *-el-*, *-en-*, *-er-* were preceded by *m*, *v*, *þ* the medial *-e-* was retained in writing, but not in pronunciation, as *hamēres*, *develes*, *heveñes*, *brōþeres*. All nouns ending in *f*, *s*, *þ* changed these to *v*, *z* (written *s*), and *ð* (written *þ*) in the inflected forms. Original medial double consonants were generally simplified when they came to stand finally, as gen. *hilles*, *mannes*, *pottes* beside nom. *hil*, *man*, *pot*. With rare exceptions the Anglo-Norman nouns were inflected in ME. like the native English nouns which in OE. belonged to the masculine *a*-declension, that is the genitive singular ended in *-es*, the dative in *-e*, and the plural in *-es*.

#### A. THE VOCALIC OR STRONG DECLENSION

##### 1. MASCULINE NOUNS.

§ 321. To this declension belong: (a) the OE. masculine *a-*, *ja-*, and *wa-*stems; (b) the OE. masculine *i-*stems; and (c) the OE. masculine *u-*stems. In OE. the nominative and accusative singular of the *a*-stems, the *ja*-stems with an

original short stem-syllable, and the long *i*- and *u*-stems generally ended in a consonant, as *stān* *stone*, *dæg* *day*, *mearh* *horse*, *scōh* *shoe*; *hyll* *hill*, *mycg* *midge*; *dæl* *part*, *giest* *guest*, *wyrm* *worm*; *feld* *field*, *sumor* *summer*; but the nominative and accusative singular of the *ja*-stems with an original long stem-syllable, the short *i*- and *u*-stems ended in a vowel, as *ende* *end*, *drincere* *drinker*; *wine* *friend*, *stede* *place*; *sunu* *son*, *wudu* *wood*. This difference in the ending of the nominative and accusative singular was regularly preserved in nearly all the nouns in ME.

§ 322. In passing from OE. to ME. the following changes took place in the nom. and acc. singular: nouns like *dæg* came to end in a diphthong, as *dai* (pl. *daies* beside *dawes*), *wei* (OE. *weg*), which also sometimes took *-e* from the inflected forms, as *daie* (*daye*), *weie* (*weye*, *Ormulum* *wezze*). Nouns of the type *mearh*, *scōh*, *mycg* came to end in a vowel through having been remodelled after the analogy of the inflected forms, as *mēre* (OE. *mearh*, gen. *mēāres*), *schō* (OE. *scōh*, gen. *scōs*), *migge* (OE. *mycg*, gen. *mycges*). In late ME. a mute *-e* was sometimes added to monosyllables ending in a single consonant and containing a long vowel in order to indicate that the preceding vowel was long, as *stōne* *stone*, *strēme* *stream*, beside *stōn*, *strēm* (§ 11). Final *-u* was weakened to *-e* (§ 134).

§ 323. ME. nouns ending in a consonant, and generally also those ending in a diphthong, took *-es* (also sometimes written *-us*, *-is*, *-ys*, § 134) in the gen. singular, as *stōnes*, *daies* beside *dais*, and those ending in a vowel took *-s*, as *schōs*, *sēs* *seas*. In early ME. the dat. singular ended in *-e* (§ 141). This *-e* was retained when the nom. and acc. ended in *-e*, but when they did not end in *-e* they came to be used for the dative also, as nom. acc. and dat. sing. *stōn*, *schō*, *dai*. Trisyllabic forms containing medial *-el-*, *-en-*, *-er-* generally syncopated the medial *-e-*, as gen. *apples*, *fingres* beside nom. *appel*, *finger* (cp. § 102).

§ 324. Through the weakening of the OE. ending *-as* to *-es* in ME. the ending of the nom. and acc. plural came to be like that of the gen. singular. The OE. gen. plural ending *-a* and the dat. ending *-um* were weakened to *-e* and *-en* which remained in the transition period, but already in early ME. they were supplanted by the nominative and accusative, and thus all cases of the plural came to be alike.

§ 325. *stōn* *stone*, *engel* *angel*, *ende* *end*, and *sone* *son* will serve as models for the nouns belonging to this declension.

§ 326.		ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	Acc.	<i>stōn</i>	<i>stān</i>	<i>engel</i>	<i>engel</i>
	Gen.	<i>stōnes</i>	<i>stānes</i>	<i>engles</i>	<i>engles</i>
	Dat.	<i>stōn(e)</i>	<i>stāne</i>	<i>engle</i>	<i>engle</i>
Plural Nom.	Acc.	<i>stōnes</i>	<i>stānas</i>	<i>engles</i>	<i>englas</i>
	Gen.	<i>stōnes</i>	<i>stāna</i>	<i>engles</i>	<i>engla</i>
	Dat.	<i>stōnes</i>	<i>stānum</i>	<i>engles</i>	<i>englum</i>

§ 327. Like *stōn* are declined a large number of nouns, as *arm*, *bōt*, *brōm*, *cōmb*, *craft*, *dōm*, *fisch*, *gōst* *ghost*, *hail*, *hōm*, *hound*, *king*, *nail*, *rein* *rain*, *rōp*, *roum* *room*, *schaft*, *stōl*, *storm*, *swan*, *trough*, *wind*, &c. ; and similarly old long *wa*-stems, as *snōw*, *dēw* ; old long *i*-stems, as *dēl*, *dint*, *gest*, *flīht*, *pliht*, *wurm* ; old long *u*-stems, as *fēld*, *ford*, *porn*, &c. Nouns ending in a voiceless spirant changed it to the corresponding voiced spirant in the inflected forms, as *pēf* *thief*, *mouþ*, gen. *pēves*, *mouþes*, and similarly *lōf* *loaf*, *knif*, *staf*, *wolf*, *ōþ* *oath*, *pap*. Medial double consonants were simplified when they came to stand finally, as gen. *briddes*, *hilles*, *pittes*, *walles*, beside nom. *brid*, &c.

§ 328. Like *engel* are declined nouns ending in *-el*, *-en*, *-er*, as *appel*, *crādel*, *girdel*, *hunger*, *sadel*, *pimbel*, *punder*. But when the *-el*, *-en*, *-er* were preceded by *m* or *v* the medial *-e-* was written in the inflected forms, but was not

pronounced, as gen. hameres, hevēnes, dat. hamēre, hevēne : nom. hamer, heven.

§ 329.		ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	Acc.	ende	ende	sone	sunu
	Gen.	endes	endes	sones	sunā
	Dat.	ende	ende	sone	sunā
Plural Nom.	Acc.	endes	endas	sones	sunā
	Gen.	endes	enda	sones	sunā
	Dat.	endes	endum	sones	sunum

And similarly mēre märe *horse*, sēle *seal* (animal); old ja-stems like migge *midge*, rigge *back*, wegge *wedge*; herde *shepherd*, whēte; bākere, drinkere, fischere; old short i-stems, as bile *bill*, bite, dēne *valley*, stiche; old short u-stems, as mēde *mead*, spite *spit*, 'veru', wode *wude wood*.

§ 330. Nouns ending in a vowel other than -e had simply -s in the gen. singular and in the plural, and no -e in the dat. singular, as flē *flea*, gen. flēs, dat. flē, pl. flēs, and similarly schō *shoe*, sē *sea*, peni (inflected peniēs, penes). dai and wei were also similarly inflected, as dais, dat. sing. dai.

## 2. NEUTER NOUNS.

§ 331. To this declension belong : (a) the OE. neuter a-, ja-, and wa-stems, and (b) the OE. neuter i-stems. These stems were inflected in OE. exactly like the corresponding masculine stems except in the nom. and acc. plural. In OE. the nom. and acc. plural of neuter stems ended either in -u or had no ending (*HOE. Gr.* § 188), whereas the masculine stems ended in -as (= ME. -es). Therefore in treating the neuter nouns it is only necessary to take into consideration the formation of the plural.

1. When the singular ended in a consonant the plural was generally formed by adding -es after the analogy of the old masculine a-declension, as word, pl. wordes, and similarly



bak, barn, bōn, bord, horn, land, nest, schip, werk; lēf leaf, pl. lēves, and similarly baþ, hous, lif, &c.; water, pl. watres, and similarly tōken, wonder, but pl. maidens never maidnes in Chaucer; ja-stems, as bed, pl. beddes, and similarly bil, den, kin, net, rib, web; long i-stems, as flēsch, pl. flēsches, and similarly flēs fleece, hilt, &c.

Monosyllabic nouns with a long stem-syllable denoting collectivity, weight, measure, and time generally remained uninflected in the plural just as in OE., as dēþ deer, folk, nēt cattle, pound, schēp, swīn, ȝēr ȝēr year, &c., cp. NE. deer, sheep, swine, five-pound note. This rule practically agrees with that in the modern dialects. In all the modern dialects nouns denoting collectivity, time, space, weight, measure, and number when immediately preceded by a cardinal number generally remain unchanged in the plural, see *ED. Gr.* § 382.

2. When the singular ended in a vowel or a diphthong in ME. the plural took -s after the analogy of the corresponding old masculine nouns, as cōle coal, pl. cōles, and similarly, dāle, gāte, hōle, ȝōke (§ 103), fē (OE. feoh, gen. fēos) cattle; old long ja-stems, as ěrende errand, flicche, stēle steel; old wa-stems, as mēle meal, flour, tēre tar; knē, trē, strēþ beside straw (OE. strēa beside gen. \*strawes); short i-stems, as sive sieve, spēre spear, &c.

### 3. FEMININE NOUNS.

§ 332. To this declension belong: (a) the OE. ō-, jō-, and wō-stems; (b) the OE. feminine i-stems; and (c) the OE. feminine u-stems. After the OE. final vowels had been weakened to -e the following changes took place in the types of nouns belonging to this declension: In the ō- and jō-stems which in OE. ended in a consonant the -e of the oblique cases was levelled out into the nominative, as bōte advantage, sōule, henne = OE. bōt, sāwol, henn. In the wō-

stems we have double forms in ME. according as the old nominative or accusative singular became generalized, as short *wō*-stems *schāde* (= OE. nom. *sceadu*) beside *schadwe* (= OE. acc. *sceadwe*), *sine* (= OE. nom. *sinu*, *sionu*) beside *sinewe* (= OE. acc. *sinwe*) *sineu*; long *wō*-stems, as *mēde* with *-e* from the inflected forms (= OE. nom. *mǣd*) beside *medwe medewe* (= OE. acc. *mǣdwe*) *mēadow*. In the *i*-stems the *-e* of the gen. and dat. was levelled out into the nom. and accusative, as *quēne* (= OE. nom. acc. *cwēn*, gen. and dat. *cwēne*). In the long *u*-stems the *-e* (= OE. *-a*) of the gen. and dat. was not levelled out into the nom. and accusative, as nom. acc. *hand*, *flōr*, *quern* = OE. *hand*, *flōr*, *cweorn* *hand-mill*. The *-e* of the oblique cases was also not levelled out into the nominative or respectively into the nominative and accusative of other stems ending in *-ing* (*-ung*), *-st*, *-ȝt*, as *lerning*, *fist*, *miȝt* = OE. *leornung*, *fȳst*, *miht*. With the exception of the types of nouns just mentioned, all the other types belonging to this declension regularly have *-e* from older *-u* in the nominative, as *tāle* (= OE. *talū*), *love* (= OE. *lufu*), &c.

§ 333. In early Northumbrian, and then later also in WS. and Kentish, the acc. sing. of the *i*-stems often had *-e* after the analogy of the *ō*-stems. The genitive ending *-(e)s* of the strong masc. and neut. nouns was gradually extended to the feminine, but throughout the ME. period forms without *-s* are sometimes found. Feminine nouns denoting animate objects generally had the ending *-(e)s*, whereas abstract nouns and nouns denoting inanimate objects mostly or often had simply *-e*. The nom. and acc. of those nouns which in ME. ended in a consonant came to be used for the dative at an early period, as *hand*, *lerning*, *fist*, &c. Chaucer has the dat. *honde* beside *hond*. The plural ending of the OE. masculine *a*- and *i*-declensions was gradually extended to the strong feminines. The strong feminines had begun to take the *s*-plural in Northumbrian already in the late OE. period,

as *saules*, *dēdes*, &c. The strong feminines regularly formed their plural in *-(e)s* in Chaucer, but the southern dialects of the fourteenth century mostly had *-en* after the analogy of the *n*-declension. Later on, however, the plural in these dialects also took the ending *-(e)s*. See §§ 315-17.

§ 334. *tāle number*, *tale*, while *time*, *quēne queen*, and *hand* will serve as models for the nouns belonging to this declension.

## § 335.

Sing. M.F.	OE.	ME.	OE.	ME.	OE.
Nom. <i>tāle</i>	<i>talū</i>	<i>while</i>	<i>hwīl</i>	<i>quēne</i>	<i>cwēn</i>
Acc. <i>tāle</i>	<i>tale</i>	<i>while</i>	<i>hwīle</i>	<i>quēne</i>	<i>cwēn</i>
Gen. <i>tāle(s)</i>	<i>tale</i>	<i>while(s)</i>	<i>hwīle</i>	<i>quēne(s)</i>	<i>cwēne</i> ,
Dat. <i>tāle</i>	<i>tale</i>	<i>while</i>	<i>hwīle</i>	<i>quēne</i>	<i>cwēne</i>
Plural					
Nom. { <i>tāles</i>	<i>tala, -e</i>	<i>whiles</i>	<i>hwīla, -e</i>	<i>quēnes</i>	<i>cwēne, -a</i>
Acc. {					
Gen. <i>tāles</i>	<i>tala, -ena</i>	<i>whiles</i>	<i>hwīla, -ena</i>	<i>quēnes</i>	<i>cwēna</i>
Dat. <i>tāles</i>	<i>talum</i>	<i>whiles</i>	<i>hwīlum</i>	<i>quēnes</i>	<i>cwēnum</i>

§ 336. Like *tāle* are declined the OE. *ō*-stems with a short stem-syllable, as *cāre*, *love*, *schāme*, *wrāke vengeance*; the OE. abstract nouns in *-þu*, as *lengþe*, *strengþe*; the OE. *wō*-stems with a short stem-syllable, as *schāde* (*schadwe*), *sine* (*sinewe*); and the OE. short *u*-stems, as *dore dure*, *nōse*.

§ 337. Like *while* are declined the OE. *ō*-stems which did not have *-u* in the nom. singular, as *fetere*, *feþere*, *glōve*, *lōre*, *nēdle*, *neteþe*, *sorwe*, *soule*, *wounde*; the OE. *jō*-stems, as *brigge bridge*, *cribbe*, *egge edge*, *helle*, *henne*, *sibbe relationship*, *sille*, *sinne*; *blisse*, *hinde doe*, *hōlinesse*, *reste*; the OE. long *wō*-stems, *mēde* (*medwe*), *stowe*.

§ 338. Like *quēne* are declined the OE. feminine *i*-stems, as *benche*, *bride*, *dēde*, *hide*, *hive*, *nēde need*, *spēde success*, *tide*.

§ 339.		ME.	OE.
	Sing. Nom. Acc.	hand	hand
	Gen.	hande(s)	handa
	Dat.	hand(e)	handa
	Plural Nom. Acc.	handes	handa
	Gen.	handes	handa
	Dat.	handes	handum

§ 340. Like *hand* *hond* are declined the OE. feminine long *u*-stems, as *flōr*, *quern hand-mill*; the OE. abstract nouns in *-ung* (*-ing*) and nouns ending in *-st*, *-ht*, as *blessing*, *ēvening*, *larning*, *fist*, *miȝt*.

#### B. THE WFAK OR N-DECLENSION

§ 341. This declension contained in OE. masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns. It contained a large number of masculine and feminine nouns, but only three neuter nouns all of which denote parts of the body, viz. *ēage eye*, *ēare ear*, and *wange cheek*. The only distinction between the masculines and the feminines in OE. was that the nominative singular of the former ended in *-a*, and that of the latter in *-e*. After the *-a* had been weakened to *-e* in the nom. singular of the masculines the two classes of nouns had the same endings in all cases of the singular and plural. So that the early ME. case-endings were:—

	ME.	OE.
Sing. Nom.	-e	-a, -e
Acc. Gen. Dat.	-en	-an
Plural Nom. Acc.	-en	-an
Gen.	-ene	-ena
Dat.	-en	-um

The following changes took place:—The *-e* of the nom. singular supplanted the *-en* (= OE. *-an*) of the oblique cases of the singular, and then later *-s* was added for the gen. singular. The singular thus fell together with the old

masculine, feminine, and neuter strong nouns whose nom. singular ended in *-e* in ME. The extension of *-(e)s* from the old strong masculines and neuters of the *a-* and *i-*declensions to the nouns of this declension took place earlier in the masculines than in the feminines. And in the masculines it took place earlier in nouns denoting animate objects than in those denoting inanimate objects. In Chaucer the old feminines generally have *-(e)s* in the gen. singular, but forms like gen. *lādy*, *sonne*, *widwe* also occur. The old *-en* plurals remained much longer in the southern and Kentish dialects than in the Midland and northern. In the former dialects the *-en* plural was often extended to nouns which were strong in OE. and even also to Anglo-Norman words. This was especially common with the gen. plural ending *-ene* (= OE. *-ena*) of the OE. *ō-* and *n-*declensions. On the other hand the *-en* plural was supplanted by the *-(e)s* plural at an early period in the northern and north Midland dialects. For the approximate dates at which the change from the weak to the strong declension took place in the separate dialects, see § 316.

§ 342. The three OE. neuter nouns *ēage*, *ēare*, *wange* = ME. *ēȝe*, *eye*, *ȝe* (§ 107, 6), *ēre*, *wange* (*wonge*) were inflected in ME. like the old masculine and feminine weak nouns. The old masculine and feminine contracted weak nouns were inflected in ME. just like the uncontracted nouns, as *flē* (OE. *flēa*) *flea*, pl. *flēs*, *flēn*, and similarly *fō* *foe*, *rō* *roe*; *bē* (OE. *bēo*) *bee*, pl. *bēs*, *bēn*, and similarly *slō* *sloe*, *tō* *toe*.

§ 343. Examples of OE. masculine nouns which belong to this declension in ME. are: *āpe*, *asse*, *bēre*, *bowe* (OE. *boga*) *bow*, *bukke*, *dogge*, *fōle*, *frogge*, *hāre*, *lippe*, *mōne*, *nāme*, *oxe*, *sterre* *star*, *poumbe* *thumb*, &c. And of feminine nouns: *asche*, *belle*, *bladdre*, *chēke*, *chirche*, *cuppe*, *harpe*, *herte*, *moppe*, *oule*, *pīpe*, *sonne*, *swalwe*, *tonge* *tunge*, *prōte*, *widewe*, *wolle* *wool*. *lādi* older

lavdie, lavedie (OE. *hlæfdige*) lost its final -e at an early period, cp. Orm's *laffdiȝ* (§ 154), and similarly *pley* (OE. *plega*).

§ 344. Only a small number of the old plurals in -en are found in Chaucer, as *hōsen*, *oxen*; in a few words he has weak and strong forms side by side, as *aschen*, *bēen*, *fleēn*, *fōon*, *tōon* beside *asches*, *bēes*, *fleēs*, *fōos*, *tōos*, and in the old strong noun *schoon* beside *schoos*.

### C. THE MINOR DECLENSIONS

§ 345. The nouns belonging to these categories are all old consonant stems, and include nouns belonging to all genders. In treating their history in ME. we shall follow the same order as in the *EOE. Gr.* §§ 255-67.

#### 1. MONOSYLLABIC CONSONANT STEMS.

##### *a. Masculine.*

§ 346. The nouns of this type had umlaut in the dat. singular and the nom. acc. plural, otherwise the case-endings were the same as in the OE. masculine a-declension. In ME. a new dat. singular in -e without umlaut was formed after the analogy of nouns like *stōn*, as *fōte* beside OE. *fēt*. The OE. umlauted form of the nom. acc. plural remained and also came to be used for the dative, to which was then added the ending -es to form a new genitive, as nom. acc. dat. *fēt*, gen. *fētes* beside OE. nom. acc. *fēt*, gen. *fōta*, dat. *fōtum*, and similarly *man*, gen. *mannes*, pl. *men*; *wim(m)an* *wum(m)an* *wom(m)an*, pl. *wim(m)en*, &c.; *tōp*, pl. *tēp*.

##### *b. Feminine.*

§ 347. The nouns of this type had umlaut in the dat. singular, and many also had it in the genitive, as dat. sing. *bēc*, *hnyte*, gen. *bēc* beside *bōce*, *hnute*. These cases

were remodelled in ME. after the analogy of the old a-declension, as nom. acc. *bōk*, note nute *nut*, gen. *bōkes*, notes, dat. *bōke*, note. In OE. the nom. acc. plural had umlaut, as *bēc*, *hnyte*, otherwise the case-endings of the plural were the same as in the a-declension. Of the OE. nouns which belonged to this type five preserved the umlaut in the nom. acc. plural in ME., and these cases also came to be used for the old genitive and dative, as nom. acc. gen. dat. *gēs* beside OE. nom. acc. *gēs*, gen. *gōsa*, dat. *gōsum*; and similarly *lous*, pl. *līs*; *mous*, pl. *mīs*; *brēch* (OE. *brēc* beside sing. *brōc*) *trousers*; *cou*, pl. *kī kȳ* beside *kȳn kīen* with *-n*, *-en* from the weak declension. In all the other nouns a new plural in *-es* was formed from the singular after the analogy of nouns like *stōn*, pl. *stōnes*, as nom. acc. gen. dat. *bōkes*, beside OE. nom. acc. *bēc*, gen. *bōca*, dat. *bōcūm*; and similarly *burȝ* *buruȝ* *borough*, pl. *burȝes* *burwes*; *furȝ* *furuȝ* *furrow*, pl. *furȝes* *furwes*; *gōtes* beside *gēt* *goats*; *nite*, pl. *nites*; *niȝt*, pl. *niȝtes* beside *niȝt* *nights*; *note*, pl. *notes* *nuts*; *ōk*, pl. *ōkes* *oaks*; *turf*, pl. *turves*.

c. *Neuter.*

§ 348. The only noun belonging to this type in OE. was *scrūd garment*. Already in OE. it had come to be declined like the long neuter a-stems except that the dat. singular was *scrȳd* beside *scrūde*. In ME. it was declined like an ordinary old neuter a-stem with dat. in *-(e)* and plural in *-es*, as *schroud*, pl. *schroudes*.

2. STEMS IN *-þ*.

§ 349. Of the four OE. nouns belonging to this type only two were preserved in ME., viz. *mōneþ* (OE. *mōnaþ*), and *āle ale* (OE. *ealu*, gen. and dat. *ealop*). In OE. *mōnaþ* was declined like a masc. a-stem except that the nom. acc. plural was *mōnaþ*. In ME. a new plural in *-es* was formed

after the analogy of nouns like *stōnes*, as *mōn(e)þes* beside the uninflected form *mōneþ*. *āle* remained uninflected in ME.

### 3. STEMS IN -r.

§ 350. To this type belong the nouns of relationship: *fader* (OE. *fæder*), *brōþer* (OE. *brōþor*), *mōder* (OE. *mōdor*), *ḡouȝter* (OE. *dohtor*), *suster soster* (OE. *sweostor*), *sister* (ON. *syster*).

The plural of *fæder* was inflected like a masculine a-stem. The nom. acc. pl. *fæderas* regularly became *fadres faderes* in ME. and was then used for the gen. and dat. also. In OE. the sing. was *fæder* in all cases, but the gen. had *faderes* beside *fæder*, and similarly in ME. nom. acc. dat. *fader*, gen. *fader* beside *fadres*.

The uninflected forms *brōþer*, *mōder*, *ḡouȝter* of the nom. acc. and gen. singular came to be used for the old unlauded forms *brēþer*, *mēder*, *dehter* of the dat. singular, so that the singular of these nouns generally remained uninflected in ME., but sometimes, however, a gen. *brōþeres*, *mōdres*, *ḡouȝtres* is also found.

The OE. nom. acc. pl. *mōdor*, *dohtor* regularly became *mōder*, *ḡouȝter* in ME., and were then used for the old gen. and dative, but beside these forms there also occur plurals in -es after the analogy of *fadres*, &c., and in -en after the analogy of the weak declension, as *mōdres*, *mōdren*; *ḡouȝtres*, *ḡouȝtren*. *brōþer* also has three plural forms all of which are new formations, viz. *brēþer* formed after the analogy of words like *tōþ*, pl. *tēþ*; *brōþeres* formed after the analogy of words like *fader*, pl. *fadres*; and *brēþeren* formed from *brēþer* with -en from the weak declension.

*suster soster* (OE. *sweostor*), *sister* (ON. *syster*) remained uninflected in the singular just as in OE. This word like *mōder* has also three plural forms in ME., viz. *suster*, *soster*, *sister*, and the plural forms in -en, -es, as *sustren*, *sustres*.



## 4. MASCULINE STEMS IN -nd.

§ 351. OE. had several nouns of this type of which only two were preserved in ME., viz. *frēnd friend* (OE. *frēond*) and *fēnd enemy, fiend* (OE. *fēond*), see § 73. In OE. the dat. sing. and nom. acc. pl. had umlauted beside unumlauted forms, as dat. sing. *frīend* beside *frēonde*, pl. *frīend* beside *frēondas*, otherwise the nouns of this type were inflected like masculine a-stems. In ME. the umlauted form of the dat. singular disappeared, so that the singular was inflected just like an old masculine a-stem. In early ME. the umlauted plural form *frēnd* (OE. *frīend*) was preserved, and then later the -es plural *frēndes* (OE. *frēondas*) became generalized for all cases, and similarly with *fēnd*.

## 5. NEUTER STEMS IN -os, -es.

§ 352. This declension originally contained a large number of nouns, all of which, with the exception of six, passed over into other declensions in the prehistoric period of the language. The six nouns which remained are: *cealf calf*, *cild child*, *æg egg*, *lamb lamb*, *speld splinter*, and the pl. *brēadru crumbs*, the last two of which disappeared in ME.

The singular of *cealf*, *cild*, *æg*, and *lamb* was inflected in OE. like an a-stem, and similarly also in ME. In OE. the plural of these nouns was *cealfu*, *ægru*, *lambru*, and *cild* beside *cildru*. The ending -ru regularly became -re in ME., to which was added -n in the southern dialects after the analogy of the weak declension, as *calvren*, *eiren*, *lombren*, *children* beside *childer*. In the northern dialects we also have *children* beside *childer*, but in the other words a new plural in -es was formed direct from the singular, as *calves*, *lambes*, *egges* from ON. *egg*, and then the -es plural gradually spread to all the dialects.

## CHAPTER VIII

## ADJECTIVES

## 1. THE DECLENSION OF ADJECTIVES

*a.* THE STRONG DECLENSION.

§ 353. In OE. the strong declension is divided into pure *a*-, *ō*-stems, *ja*-, *jō*-stems, and *wa*-, *wō*-stems like the corresponding nouns. The original *i*- and *u*-stems passed over almost entirely into this declension in prehistoric OE. In OE. the declension of the *ja*-, *jō*-stems and *wa*-, *wō*-stems only differed from that of the pure *a*-, *ō*-stems in the masc. and fem. nom. singular and the neuter nom. acc. singular, and even here the *ja*-, *jō*-stems with an original short stem-syllable and the *wa*-, *wō*-stems with a long stem-syllable were declined like pure *a*-, *ō*-stems, see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 270, 279, 284. The ending of the nom. singular of the various types was accordingly in OE. :—

	<i>Masc.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
Pure <i>a</i> -, <i>ō</i> -stems or stems declined like them	—	—	—, - <i>u</i> (- <i>o</i> )
<i>ja</i> -, <i>jō</i> -stems or stems declined like them	- <i>e</i>	- <i>e</i>	- <i>u</i> (- <i>o</i> )
Short <i>wa</i> -, <i>wō</i> -stems.	- <i>u</i> (- <i>o</i> )	- <i>u</i> (- <i>o</i> )	- <i>u</i> (- <i>o</i> )

After the ending -*u* (-*o*) had been weakened to -*e* (§ 134, *a*), the masc. neut. and fem. singular of the adjectives of these types ended in a consonant or in -*e*, as short *a*-, *ō*-stems : *glad* (OE. masc. and neut. *glæd*, fem. *gladu*, -*o*), and similarly *blak*, *smal*, &c. ; long *a*-, *ō*-stems and long *wa*-, *wō*-stems : *brōd* *broad* (OE. masc. neut. and fem. *brād*), and similarly *cōld*, *dēd* *dead*, *dēf* *deaf*, *hard*, *lang* (long), *rēd*

*red*, *riȝt*, *wīs*; *slōw* (OE. *slāw* with *-w* from the inflected forms); pl. *fēwe* (OE. *fēawe* *few*); *ja-*, *jō*-stems: *clēne* (OE. masc. and neut. *clāne*, fem. *clānu*, *-o*), and similarly *blīpe*, *grēne*, *kēne*, *newe*, *ripe*, *pinne*, &c.; *frē* (OE. *frēo* *free*); short *wa-*, *wō*-stems: *narwe* (OE. masc. neut. and fem. *nearu*, gen. masc. and neut. *nearwes*) with *w* from the old inflected forms, and similarly *falewe* (*fāle*) *fallow*, *ȝelwe* (*ȝelowe*) *yellow*, &c.

A certain number of OE. adjectives with a short stem-syllable came to end in *-e* in ME. through the levelling out of the inflected forms, as *bāre* beside *bar* (OE. *bær*, gen. *bares*), and similarly *lāte*, *smāle* beside *lat*, *smal*, see § 103. And as OE. final *-ig* was weakened to *-i* in ME. all the adjectives of this type also ended in a vowel in ME., as *hevi* (OE. *hefig*), and similarly *blōdi*, *hōli*, &c., see § 138.

§ 354. The OE. endings of the oblique cases were:—

	<i>Masc.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
Sing. Acc.	<i>-ne</i>	= Nom.	<i>-e</i>
Gen.	<i>-es</i>	<i>-es</i>	<i>-re</i>
Dat.	<i>-um</i>	<i>-um</i>	<i>-re</i>
Plural Nom. Acc.	<i>-e</i>	—, <i>-u</i> ( <i>-o</i> )	<i>-a</i> , <i>-e</i>
Gen.	<i>-ra</i>	<i>-ra</i>	<i>-ra</i>
Dat.	<i>-um</i>	<i>-um</i>	<i>-um</i>

In late OE. and early ME. the endings *-um*, *-u* (*-o*), *-a*, and *-ra* were regularly weakened to *-en*, *-e*, *-re* (§ 134). A few of the old case-endings are occasionally found in early ME., viz. the ending of the acc. masc. singular *-ne*, the gen. and dat. fem. singular *-re* (*-ere*), and a few isolated forms of the gen. plural were still preserved in Chaucer, as *oure aller cok*, *alderbest*, *alderwerst*, *alderfirst*, see § 148. Apart from these isolated forms of the gen. plural, the form of the masc. nom. singular had become generalized for the whole of the singular, and the form of the nom. acc. plural had become generalized for the whole of the plural before the end

of the first half of the thirteenth century. We accordingly arrive at the following scheme for the inflexion of strong adjectives in what might be termed standard ME. :—

(a) Monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant remained uninflected throughout the singular, and had *-e* throughout the plural, as *brōð*, *gōð*, *glad*, pl. *brōðe*, *gōðe*, *glade*.

(b) Adjectives which ended in a vowel in OE. or which came to end in a vowel in ME. remained uninflected throughout the singular and plural.

(c) Dissyllabic adjectives including past participles ending in a consonant remained uninflected throughout the singular and plural through loss of the old final *-e* in the plural, as *bitter*, *litel*, *bounden*, *cursed*, &c., see § 142.

The Anglo-Norman adjectives were generally inflected like the native English adjectives.

#### b. THE WEAK DECLENSION.

§ 355. In OE. the weak declension of adjectives had the same case-endings as the weak declension of nouns except that the gen. plural had the strong ending *-ra* beside the weak ending *-ena*. The nom. singular of the masculine ended in *-a*, and that of the feminine and neuter in *-e*, as *gōða*, *gōðe*; *clāna*, *clāne*; *nearwa*, *nearwe*. Through the weakening of the final *-a* to *-e* the nom. singular came to be alike for all genders in ME.

§ 356. The endings of the oblique cases were:—

	<i>Masc.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>	<i>Fem.</i>
Sing. Acc.	<i>-an</i>	<i>-e</i>	<i>-an</i>
Gen.	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>
Dat.	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>
Plural Nom. Acc.	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>	<i>-an</i>
Gen.	<i>-ena</i>	<i>-ena</i>	<i>-ena</i>
Dat.	<i>-um</i>	<i>-um</i>	<i>-um</i>

In late OE. and early ME. the endings *-an*, *-ena*, *-um* were regularly weakened to *-en*, *-ene*, and even these two

endings had ceased to be in use after about the beginning of the thirteenth century. In ordinary standard ME. the only distinction preserved between the old strong and weak declensions of adjectives is in the singular of monosyllabic adjectives ending in a consonant, as strong sing. *gōd*, pl. *gōde*; weak sing. *gōde*, pl. *gōde*. In all the other types of adjectives there was no longer any distinction between the strong and weak declensions.

## 2. THE COMPARISON OF ADJECTIVES

§ 357. In OE. the comparative and superlative belonged to the weak declension except that the neuter nom. acc. singular had the strong beside the weak form in the superlative, but in ME. they ceased to be inflected at an early period, cp. § 154. In OE. the comparative had or had not umlaut in the stem-syllable according as the ending *-ra* corresponded to Germanic *-izō* or *-ōzō*, and similarly in the superlative *-est* = Germanic *-ist* beside *-ost* = Germanic *-ōst*, see *EOE. Gr.* § 291, as

	<i>eald old</i>	<i>ieldra</i>	<i>ieldest</i>
	<i>grēat great</i>	<i>grietra</i>	<i>grietest</i>
	<i>lang long</i>	<i>lengra</i>	<i>lengest</i>
but	<i>earm poor</i>	<i>earmra</i>	<i>earmost</i>
	<i>glæd glad</i>	<i>glædra</i>	<i>gladost</i>
	<i>lēof dear</i>	<i>lēofra</i>	<i>lēofost</i>

The *-ra* and *-ost* regularly became *-re* (*-ere*) and *-est* in late OE. and early ME. (§§ 148, 149), so that in ME. the comparative was generally formed by means of *-re* (*-ere*), later *-(e)r*, and the superlative by *-(e)st*, as

<i>hard</i>	<i>harder</i>	<i>hardest</i>
<i>fair</i>	<i>fairer</i>	<i>fairest</i>
<i>clēne</i>	<i>clēner</i>	<i>clēnest</i>

§ 358. Only a small number of OE. adjectives had um-

laut in the comparative and superlative, and even some of these did not have it in ME. The most important ME. examples are:—

grēt	gretter (OE. grētra)	grettest
lang (long)	lenger	lengest beside longest
neiȝ, nīȝ <i>near</i>	nēre (OE. nēahra) nerre (OE. nēarra)	next (OE. nīehst)
ōld	elder	
strang (strong)	strenger	eldest strengest

§ 359. Long vowels were regularly shortened in the comparative (§ 90), and then the short vowel was often extended to the superlative, and sometimes even to the positive, as

grēt	gretter	grettest
hōt	hotter	hottest
lāte	latter	last
stif	stiffer	stiffest

In later ME. the comparative and superlative were generally formed direct from the positive, as grēter, grētest beside older gretter, grettest; and similarly ōlder, ōldest beside elder, eldest; lāter, lātest beside latter, last; &c.

§ 360. Anglo-Norman monosyllabic and dissyllabic adjectives also formed their comparative in -er and superlative in -est, but adjectives of more than two syllables generally formed their comparative and superlative by prefixing mōre, mōst to the positive.

§ 361. A certain number of adjectives in ME. as in OE. and NE. form their comparatives and superlatives from a different root than the positive:—

gōd	better	best
ēvel, ill, badde	werse, wurse	werst, wurst
muche(l), mikel	mōre (māre)	mēst (mōst, māst)
litel, līte	lasse, lesse	lēst(e)

§ 362. In a certain number of OE. words the comparative was originally formed from an adverb or a preposition, with a superlative in *-um-*, *-uma*. The simple superlative suffix was preserved in OE. *forma* = Goth. *fruma*, ME. *þe forme the first*, from which was formed in ME. the new comparative *former*. In prehistoric OE., as in Gothic, to *-um-* was added the ordinary superlative suffix *-ist* which gave rise to the double superlative suffix *-umist*, as Goth. *frumists first*, *hindumists hindmost*. In OE. *-umist* regularly became *-ymist*, later *-imest*, *-emest*, *-mest*, as *inne within*, *innera*, *innemest*. In ME. the ending *-mest* came to be associated with *mēst*, later *mōst* (*māst*) with *ō* (*ā*) from the old comparative, whence such ME. forms as *formēst*, *formōst*, *formāst*, beside *formest*, and similarly *inmōst* (*innermōst*), *souþmōst*, *ūtmōst* (*uttermōst*), &c.

### 3. NUMERALS

#### a. CARDINAL NUMERALS.

§ 363. Apart from the regular phonological changes the cardinal numerals also underwent other changes in passing from OE. to ME. The following are the most important changes to be noted :—

*ōn* (northern *ān*), but *ō* (northern *ā*) before words beginning with a consonant, was used as a numeral ; and the early shortened form *an*, but *a* before words beginning with a consonant, was used as the indefinite article.

*twō*, *twō*, *tō* (northern *tuā*) = OE. fem. and neut. *twā*, came to be used also for the masculine ; and similarly *twein(e)*, *tweie* (= OE. masc. *twēgen*) came to be used also for the feminine and neuter.

*prē* = OE. fem. and neut. *prīo*, *prēo*, came to be used also for the masculine.

In OE. the cardinals 4 to 19 generally remained uninflected

when they stood before a noun, whereas, if they stood after a noun or were used as nouns, they were inflected as follows: nom. acc. masc. and fem. *-e*, neut. *-u* (*-o*), gen. *-a*, dat. *-um*. The inflexional ending *-e* was also preserved in ME., especially when the numerals stood after the noun or were used alone, whence the ME. double forms *five*, *sevene*, &c., beside *fif*, *seven*, &c.

The regular OE. forms used for expressing the decades 70 to 120, as *hundseofontig*, *hundehtatig*, *hundnigontig*, *hundtēontig*, *hundendleofantig*, *hundtwelftig* were supplanted by the new formations *seventi*, &c., *hundred and ten*, *hundred and twenti*. The form *hund*, which along with the units was used to express the hundreds 200 to 900, was gradually supplanted by *hundred*. In OE. the decades, *hundred* (*hund*), and *pūsend* were nouns and governed the genitive case. In ME. they were almost exclusively used as adjectives.

§ 364. The ME. cardinals are: *ōn*, *ō* (northern *ān*, *ā*), *twō*, *twō*, *tō* (northern *tuā*), *tweine*, *tweie*; *prē*; *fōur(e)*, *fōwre*; *fif*, *five*; *six(e)*; *seven(e)*; *eiȝte*, *auȝte* (northern *aȝt(e)*); *niȝen(e)*, *nīne*; *tēne* beside the shortened form *ten* (§ 92); *ellevēn(e)*, *elevēn(e)*, *enleven*; *twelf*, *twelve*; *prettēne*, *prittēne*; *fōurtēne*; *fiftēne*; *sixtēne*; *seven-tēne*; *eiȝtetēne*; *niȝentēne*, *nīnetēne*; *twenti*, *pretti* (*pritti*), *fōurti*, *fifti*, *sixti*, *seventi*, *eiȝteti* (*eiȝti*), *niȝenti* (*nīn(e)ti*), *hundred* beside *hundrep* (ON. *hundrap*), *pousend*.

#### b. ORDINAL NUMERALS.

§ 365. In passing from OE. to ME. some of the ordinals underwent analogical changes besides the regular phonological changes. From about the end of the thirteenth century onwards the French form *secunde* was used beside the English form *ōper*. Several of the ordinals were new formations formed from the corresponding ME. cardinals, as *sevenþe* (*sevende*) beside the regular form *seveþe* (OE.



seofopa), and similarly *tenþe* (*tende*), *fourtēnde*, &c. hundred and þousend had no ordinal forms in ME. just as in OE.

§ 366. The ME. ordinals are: *first*, *furst*, *ferst*, *verst* (OE. *fyrest*), *ōþer* (*secounde*), *þridde* (*þirde*), *fourþe* (*ferþe*, *firþe*), *fifte*, *sixte*, *seveþe* (*sevenþe*, *sevende*), *eiþteþe* (*eþtende*, northern *aþtand*), *niþeþe* (*niþende*, *nīnþe*), *tēþe* (*tenþe*, *tende*), *ellefte* (*ellevende*), *twelfte*, *þrettēþe* (*þrit-ēþe*, *þrettenþe*, *þrittende*), and similarly *fourtēþe*, *fiftēþe*, *sixtēþe*, *seventēþe*, &c., *twentiþe*, *þrittiþe*, &c.

#### C. OTHER NUMERALS.

§ 367. The ME. multiplicative numeral adjectives were formed from the cardinals and the suffix *-fōld* (= OE. *-feald*), *ōnfōld* beside the loanword *simple*, *twō-*, *twō-fōld* beside the loanword *double*, *þrēfōld*, &c., *fēlefōld*, *manifōld*.

§ 368. Adverbial multiplicatives are: *ōnes*, *ānes*, *ēnes* (OE. gen. *ānes*), *twīes*, *þries*. The remaining multiplicatives were expressed by *sīþe*, *tīmes*, as *fif sīþe*, *tīmes*, &c., *fēlesīþe*, *mani sīþe*.

§ 369. For the *first*, *second*, *third*, &c., *time*, were expressed by *sīþe*, *tīme* and the ordinals just as in OE., as *þe þridde sīþe* (OE. *þriddan sīþe*).

§ 370. The distributive numerals were expressed by *bī* along with a cardinal, or by two cardinals connected by *and*, as *ōn and ōn*, *þrē and þrē*; *bī þrē*, *bī twelve*, &c.

## CHAPTER IX

### PRONOUNS

#### 1. PERSONAL

§ 371. The old accusative forms *mec*, *þec*, *ūsic* and *ēowic* of the first and second persons singular and plural had been supplanted by the old dative forms *mē*, *þē*, *ūs*, *ēow* already

in late OE., so that the old datives were used to express both cases in ME. also. And in ME. the old accusative forms of the masculine and feminine and the old accusative plural forms of the third person were also supplanted by the old dative forms. The old genitives (OE. *mīn*, *þīn*, pl. *ūre*, *ēower*; his, hie (hire), pl. *hiera*, *hira*, *heora*) lost their genitival meaning in fairly early ME. except in isolated phrases like *ūre nōn none of us*, *ūre aller of all of us*. The old genitival meaning came to be expressed by the preposition of and the dative of the personal pronouns. The old dual forms nom. *wit*, *ȝit*; acc. dat. *unc*, *inc*; gen. *uncer*, *incer* occur in *Lazamon*, *Ormulum*, *Genesis and Exodus*, *Havelok*, and *The Owl and the Nightingale*, but gradually disappeared in the latter half of the thirteenth century.

#### a. THE FIRST AND SECOND PERSONS.

§ 372. Singular: Nom. accented form: northern *ik*, *ic*, Midland and southern *ich* (§ 285), but also *ic* until the beginning of the thirteenth century. The unaccented form *i* began to be used in the northern and Midland dialects from the twelfth century onwards. At this early period *i* only occurred when the next word began with a consonant, but the *i* gradually came to be used also when the next word began with a vowel, and by about 1400 it had become the only form used in these dialects. Chaucer generally has *i* both for the accented and unaccented form. He rarely used *ich*. From *i* was formed at a later period a new accented form *ī* (= NE. *ai*), but the old unaccented form *i* has been preserved in many modern dialects in interrogative and subordinate sentences. The form *ich* was in use throughout the ME. period in the southern and south-western dialects. The forms *ich* (*uch*, *utchy*) along with contracted forms *ch'am*, &c., were formerly used in the modern dialects of Dor., Som., and Dev., and these forms are still used by old

people in a small district of Som. close to Yeovil on the borders of Dor. Contracted forms were also common in the Elizabethan dramatists in the speech of rustics, as in *King Lear* *chill I will, chud I would*. Accusative and dative *mě*.

Nom. *pū* (*pou*) beside the unaccented form *pŭ*, which became *tou* (*tŭ*) when attached enclitically to a verb, as *hastou*, *-tŭ hast thou*, *wiltou*, *-tŭ wilt thou*. This form with *t-* has also been regularly preserved in interrogative and subordinate sentences in many of the modern dialects. *Thou* in its various dialect forms is still in general use in most of the modern dialects of England, but not in Scotland, to express familiarity or contempt, but it cannot be used to a superior without conveying the idea of impertinence. Accusative and dative *pě*. From the thirteenth century onwards *žě* (*yě*) began to be used for *pou* as the pronoun of respect in addressing a superior, and in the form *ī* (generally written *ee*) it has survived in most of the south Midland and southern dialects down to the present day. During the fourteenth century *you* also came to be used for both *pou* and *pě*, and then in the fifteenth century *ye* also came to be used for the acc. *pě* and *you*.

Plural: nom. *wě*, acc. and dat. *ūs* (*ous*) beside the unaccented form *ŭs* (= NE. *us*); nom. *žě* (OE. *gě*), also written *žee*, *ye(e)*, *žhe*, *yhe*, &c., acc. and dat. *žou* (*žow*) *yōu* (for numerous variant spellings, see *N. E. D.*, s. v.) from OE. *eōw* older *ēow* (§ 112, note 1).

#### b. THE THIRD PERSON.

§ 373. Masculine Singular: nom. *hě* beside the unaccented forms *ha*, *a*, rarely *e* (still preserved in the modern dialects in the form *ə*). The dat. *him* had supplanted the old acc. *hin(e)* in the northern and Midland dialects by about 1150, and in the southern dialects in the early part of the fourteenth century. But in the south Midland and southern dialects it

must have remained in colloquial use throughout the ME. period, as is evidenced by the modern dialects of this area. **en, un** (= **ən**), the unaccented form of OE. **hine**, is still in general use in the modern dialects of the south Midland, southern, and south-western counties as the unaccented form of **'im**. It is also used of inanimate objects and in West Som. of feminine animals though never of women. Dative **him**.

§ 374. The Neuter Singular: Nom. Acc. **hit** (OE. **hit**) beside the unaccented form **it**. **it** began to appear so early as the twelfth century, and in the fifteenth century supplanted the old accented form in the standard language. **hit** is still used in the modern dialects of Scotland and Northumberland. Dative **him**, which was never used for the accusative.

§ 375. The Feminine Singular: The nom. had several forms in ME. which arose partly from OE. **hīo** (**hēo**), Anglian **hīe** *she*, and partly from the OE. feminine demonstrative **sīo** (**sēo**), Anglian **sīe** *the, that*.

Although not expressed in writing, late OE. must have had double forms of **hīo** (**hēo**), **hīe** according as the stress remained on the first element of the diphthongs or was shifted on to the second element, as **hīo** (**hēo**), **hīe** beside **hjó** (**hjó**), **hjë**. In late OE. **hīo** only occurred in Kentish where it also became a rising diphthong in early ME. (§ 67). The **hēo** regularly became **hē** in late OE. or early ME. (§ 65), and also in early ME. the forms **hjó**, **hjë** became differentiated into **hō**, **ʒhō** (also written **ʒo**, **ʒeo**, **hyo**, &c.) and **hē**, **ʒhē** (also written **ʒe**, **ge**, **ghe**, **hye**, &c.) according as the **j** element entirely disappeared or united with the aspirate **h** to form a kind of spirant. So that apart from the **sh**-forms which will be dealt with below early ME. had the four forms **hē**, **hō**, **ʒhē**, **ʒhō**. **hē** (Ken. **hī**, § 67) beside the unaccented form **ha** occurs in the south Midland (but see below) and southern dialects, especially the south-western,

until the middle of the fifteenth century, and was then gradually supplanted by *schē* in literary records. The change in these dialects was probably due to the fact that the masculine and feminine had regularly fallen together in *hē*. But it must have remained in colloquial use, because in many of the dialects of the eastern, southern, and south-western counties *ī* (generally written *he*) is still used of feminine objects. *hō* beside the unaccented forms *ha*, *a* occurs throughout the ME. period in the west Midland dialects and also in parts of the south-western area, as is evidenced by the modern dialects which regularly have *ū* (generally written *hoo*) in the west Midland area. In the west Midland dialect of the fourteenth century there also occurs the form *hue* which is a direct descendant of OE. *hēo*, see § 65. The ME. forms *ʒhē*, *ʒhō* (Orm *ʒhō*) occur so far north as the east Midland dialect, but not in the northern dialects.

The late OE. simple demonstrative *sīo* (*sēo*), Anglian *sīe* must have had the double forms *sēo*, *sīe* beside *sjō*, *sjē* just like the above *hēo*, *hīe* beside *hjō*, *hjē*. The *sjē*, *sjō* then regularly became in early ME. *schē* (also written *sge*, *shee*, *sse*, *se*, &c.) and *schō* (also written *sco*, *sso*, &c.). The type *schē* was of east Midland origin, and the earliest record of it occurs in the form *scæ* in the OE. *Chronicle* (Laud MS.) of about the middle of the twelfth century. It is not recorded elsewhere until about a hundred years later when we find it written *sge*, *sche*, *she* in *Gen. & Ex.* From about 1250 it had become fully established in the east Midland dialects. From here it first spread to the south Midland dialects where it had become the general form by the middle of the fourteenth century, and by that time it had also begun to spread to the west Midland dialects, but it never became the colloquial form in the southern dialects during the ME. period. The type *schō* was of north Midland and northern origin, and is first found in literary

records towards the end of the thirteenth century. The regular descendant of *schō* is still preserved in the form *shū*, unaccented *shē*, in many of the northern and north Midland dialects from Cum. to Der.

The OE. acc. *hīe* began to be supplanted by the dat. *hiere*, hire so early as the tenth century, and by the time of the early ME. period the *hīe* had been supplanted by *hire*, *hir*; *here*, *her* in all the dialects except Kentish where it lingered on into the early part of the fourteenth century.

§ 376. The Plural: In early ME. the OE. acc. *hīe*, *hī* was supplanted by the dative *hem* beside the unaccented forms *ham*, *hom* (= OE. *him*, *hiom*, *heom*) in the northern and Midland dialects, but the old form *hī* lingered on in the southern and south-eastern dialects until about the middle of the fourteenth century. From this *hī* was formed in the late twelfth century a new acc. plural (also used as acc. fem. singular) *hise* (*his*, *hes*) beside the unaccented forms *is* (*es*) which were often attached enclitically to a preceding word. These forms remained in these dialects until about the end of the fourteenth century, and then became obsolete.

The ordinary ME. plural forms are partly of native and partly of Scandinavian origin. In the east Midland dialects the native nom. pl. *hī*, *he* had begun to be supplanted by the Scandinavian form *pei* (ON. *þeir*) in the twelfth century, and *pei* (written *þezz*) is the only form found in the *Ormulum* (1200). By the early part of the fourteenth century it had become general in this dialect. It had also become general in the south Midland dialects before the middle of the fourteenth century, in the west Midland dialects by the second half of the fourteenth century, and in the southern dialects, including Kentish, during the fifteenth century. In the northern dialects *pai* (*þei*) is the only form even in the oldest ME. records. The substitution of the Scandinavian dat. form *þeim* for the early ME. native form *hem* did not take place concurrently with that of *pei* for *hī* in the various

dialects. Orm has *dat.* and *acc.* *peẏm* beside *hemm*, but in the other east Midland texts *peim* does not occur until the fifteenth century. It had become general in the Midland and southern dialects from about 1500. In the northern dialects *paim* (*pam*) was general in the oldest ME. records. In all the modern dialects the accented form is *ċem*, but in the dialects of England the unaccented form is *əm* (= OE. *heom*), and similarly in colloquial standard NE.

## 2. REFLEXIVE

§ 377. When the personal pronouns were used reflexively in OE. the word *self* (declined strong and weak) was often added to emphasize them, as *ic self* beside *ic selfa*, *acc. mec selfne*, *gen. mīn selves*, *dat. mē selfum*; or with the dative of the personal pronoun prefixed to the nominative *self*, as *ic mē self*, *pl. wē ūs selfe*, and similarly in early ME. From the early part of the thirteenth century new forms began to appear. In the first and second persons singular the form *self* came to be regarded as a noun and then the possessive pronoun was substituted for the dative of the personal pronoun, as *mī self*, *pī self* beside older *mē self*, *pē self*, and then in the early part of the fourteenth century this new formation was extended to the plural also, as *our(e) self(e)*, *selve(n)*, *ȝour(e) self(e)*, *selve(n)* beside older *wē ūs selve(n)*, *ȝē ȝou selve(n)*. And then towards the end of the fifteenth century the present s-plurals *ourselves*, *yourselves* came into existence and eventually became the standard forms. This change in the formation of the reflexive pronouns did not take place in the third person so early as in the first and second persons. *his selve(n)*, *peir(e) selve(n)*, *pair(e) selve(n)* beside *hem selve(n)*, *pem selve(n)* did not begin to appear until the first half of the fourteenth century. All these new formations of the third person disappeared in the standard language about the end of the fifteenth century, but have remained in the dialects down

to the present day. The s-plural *themselves* came into existence about 1500 and during the first half of the sixteenth century became the standard form. From the form alone it cannot be determined whether the *hire* in ME. *hire self* and the *her* in NE. *herself* represent the old dat. acc. or the old possessive.

In ME. as in OE. the reflexive pronouns were often also expressed simply by the acc. dat. forms of the personal pronouns as is very often the case in the modern dialects, as *And for bonnie Annie Laurie I'd lay me down and dee.*

### 3. POSSESSIVE

§ 378. The OE. possessive pronouns *mīn*, *pīn*, *sīn* *his*, *her*, *its* were declined in the singular and plural, all genders, like an ordinary strong adjective. Instead of *sīn*, which was mostly used in poetry, the genitive of the personal pronouns was generally used (masc. and neut. *his*, fem. *hiere*, *hire*). *sīn* did not survive in ME. The other possessive pronouns were expressed by the genitive of the personal pronouns, as *ūre*, beside *ūser* which did not survive in ME.; *ēower*; *hiera*, *hira*, *hiora*, *heora*. OE. *ūre* was declined like an ordinary strong adjective, see *EOE. Gr.* § 308. The old dual forms *uncer*, *incer* disappeared in the thirteenth century.

§ 379. In ME. we have to distinguish between the conjunctive and disjunctive use of the possessive pronouns:—

#### a. CONJUNCTIVE.

The conjunctive forms were: singular *mīn*, *pīn* before a following word beginning with a vowel, and *mī*, *pī* when the next word began with a consonant. The plural forms were *mīne*, *pīne*. From *mī*, *pī* were formed in the southern dialects of the twelfth century the fem. dat. sing. *mīre*, *pīre* after the analogy of forms like *hire*, *ūre* (*oure*), and similarly the fem. dat. form *ōre* from *ō* *one*. *his* with



a plural form *hise*. Beside *his* the form *hit* was used in the west Midland dialects of the fourteenth century, and similarly it in the Elizabethan dramatists, and in the modern northern and most of the Midland dialects, where in standard NE. we use *its*. The old neut. possessive *his* has been preserved in the modern Hampshire dialects. *hir(e)*, *her(e)* *her*, *our(e)*, *ȝour(e)*. To express *their* the northern dialects had *pair(e)* (ON. *pei(r)a*) in the earliest ME. records, also written *paier*, *peir* beside the unaccented forms *per(e)*, *par(e)*, and *peȝre* beside *heore* also occurs in the *Ormulum* of the east Midland dialect. The usual forms in the Midland and southern dialects were *her(e)*, *hir(e)* with their variants *hor(e)*, *har(e)*, *hur(e)*, &c. By the latter half of the fifteenth century *peir* (*pair*) had spread to all the dialects.

#### b. DISJUNCTIVE.

In OE. and early ME. the disjunctive and the conjunctive possessive pronouns were alike in form. The differentiation in form first began to appear in the northern dialects towards the end of the thirteenth century, and had gradually spread to all the other dialects by about 1500, although in some southern writers the old forms are found until well on into the seventeenth century.

The disjunctive forms were *mīn*, *pīn*, pl. *mine*, *pīne*; *his*. The possessive pronouns ending in *-r(e)* took a new genitive ending *-es*, as *hires heres hers*, *ūres oures*, *ȝoures heres* (*paieres*, *peires*) *theirs*. These new formations began to appear in the northern dialects towards the end of the thirteenth century, whence they gradually spread to the Midland dialects in the latter part of the fourteenth century. In the southern dialects the usual forms throughout the ME. period were: *hir(e)* *her(e)* *hers*, *our(e)*, *ȝour(e)*, *her(e)* *theirs*. Besides the above forms the southern and Midland dialects had forms ending in *-n* which began to be formed after the

analogy of *mīn*, *pīn* from about the middle of the fourteenth century, as *hisen* (*hisn*, *hizzen*, *hysene*), *hiren* (*hern*, *huron*) *hers*, *ouren* (*ourn*), *ʒouren* (*ʒourn*), *hiren* (*heren*, *hern*) *theirs*, and in the Midland, eastern, southern, and south-western dialects all the disjunctive pronouns including *theirn* end in *-n* right down to the present day.

## 4. DEMONSTRATIVE

§ 380. The OE. demonstrative *sē*, *þæt*, *sīo* (*sēo*) was used to express the definite article *the* and the demonstrative *that*, and was declined as follows:—

SING.	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.
Nom.	<i>sē</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>sīo</i> , <i>sēo</i>
Acc.	<i>þone</i>	<i>þæt</i>	<i>þā</i>
Gen.	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þæs</i>	<i>þære</i>
Dat.	<i>þæm</i> , <i>þām</i>	<i>þæm</i> , <i>þām</i>	<i>þære</i>
Instr.		<i>þȳ</i> , <i>þon</i>	

## PLUR. ALL GENDERS.

Nom. Acc.	<i>þā</i>
Gen.	<i>þāra</i> , <i>þæra</i>
Dat.	<i>þæm</i> , <i>þām</i>

The late OE. weakened inflected forms were for the most part preserved in early ME. The inflected forms of the singular began to be lost from about the middle of the twelfth century. This loss of inflexion began much earlier in the northern and Midland than in the southern and Kentish dialects. In fact it was only in these latter dialects that the inflected forms were preserved for any length of time in ME. The *s*-form of the nom. masc. and fem. singular had begun

to take *þ*- from the oblique forms in late OE., and by about the middle of the thirteenth century it had disappeared in all the dialects except Kentish where the masc. *ze*, and fem. *zy* remained until about a century later. In the northern and east Midland dialects the uninflected nom. masc. and fem. form *þē* had come to be simply *the* by about 1150, and almost everywhere else by about 1300. The neuter *þat* (south-eastern dialects *pet*) remained with the meaning *the* for some time longer before words beginning with a vowel, but by about 1200 (e.g. in the *Ormulum*) it had begun to be used more definitely with the meaning *that* as opposed to *this* than with the meaning *the*. Inflected forms of some of the oblique cases lingered on in the southern dialects until about 1400.

§ 381. The early ME. inflected forms were:---

Singular: Besides *þē* the masc. nom. *sē* (Ken. *zē*) also occurs, and the fem. nom. *se*, *si*, *syo* (Ken. *zy*) beside *þeo*, and the old acc. *þō*, *þa*, *þæ* used for the nom. in the thirteenth century. Accusative masc. *þan(e)*, *þon(e)*, *þen(e)*; fem. *þō*, *þa* beside the old nom. *þeo*, *þie*. Genitive masc. and neut. *þæs*, *þas*, *þes* (Orm *þess*), *þeos* (Lazamon, 1205); fem. *þer(e)*, *þar(e)*; Dative masc. and neut. *þæn*, *þen*, *þon*, *þan*, Ken. also *þo* in the first half of the fourteenth century; fem. *þer(e)*, *þar(e)*, Lazamon also *þære*. But beside these inflected forms the uninflected form *þē* had come to be used in early ME. as the definite article for all cases and genders of the singular except in a few isolated phrases like *atte nāle* (OE. *æt þām ealop*), *for þe nōnes* = *for þen ōnes* found in Chaucer, &c. *þī therefore, because* = the OE. instrumental neuter *þȳ* remained in use until about the middle of the thirteenth century, also in the compound *forþī because, for this reason, therefore* until the end of the fourteenth century, and in the weakened form *þe* before comparatives until the present day. *þon* = OE. *þon* in the compound *forþon therefore* remained until the middle of the fifteenth

century, and in the northern dialects until the end of the eighteenth century.

*pat* (*pet*) remained longer as the neuter of the definite article in the southern than in the Midland and northern dialects. *pat* for all genders with the plural *pā* = OE. *pā* had come to be used exclusively as a demonstrative in the *Ormulum* (1200), and then about 1300 *pās* = OE. *pās*, which was properly the plural of the OE. word for *this*, began to be used in the northern dialects of England as the plural of *pat*. *pōs* (§ 51) corresponding to the northern *pās* did not become common as the plural of *pat* in the Midland and southern dialects until the latter part of the fifteenth century. The old ending of the OE. neuter form of the definite article survives in *tone* = OE. *pæt ān*, and *toðer* = OE. *pæt oþer* in all the modern dialects.

Plural: The early ME. inflected forms of the plural were:—Nom. acc. *pā* in the northern dialects and *pō* in the dialects south of the Humber (§ 51). Genitive *par(e)*, *per(e)*. Dative *pan*, *pon*, *pen*. These gen. and dat. forms disappeared in the first half of the thirteenth century. As in the singular (see above) so also in the plural the uninflected form *pě* came to be used at an early period as the definite article for all cases and genders of the plural just as in Chaucer, &c. And then the northern *pā* and the Midland and southern *pō* came to be used only as the plural of the demonstrative *pat* just as in Chaucer, &c. The regular descendants (*ðē*, *ðeə*, *ðiə*) of ME. *pā those* have remained in the dialects of Scotland and in some of the northern counties of England down to the present day. *pōs* with the meaning *those* began to be used in the Midland and southern dialects from about 1475, and by about 1550 had completely supplanted the form *pō*. It is a remarkable fact that *those* is not used in genuine dialect speech in any of the modern dialects. For the various ways in which it is expressed see *ED. Gr.* § 420.

§ 382. The OE. forms for *this*, plural *these* were: masc. þēs, neut. þis, fem. þios (þeos), plural þās. This pronoun was declined as follows:—

SING.	Masc.	Neut.	Fem.
Nom.	þēs	þis	þios, þeos
Acc.	þisne	þis	þās
Gen.	þis(s)es	þis(s)es	þisse
Dat.	þis(s)um	þis(s)um	þisse
Instr.		þȳs, þīs	

PLUR. ALL GENDERS.

Nom. Acc.	þās
Gen.	þissa
Dat.	þis(s)um

The medial -ss- was often simplified to -s-. In the dat. sing. and pl. Anglian has þios(s)um, þeos(s)um with u-umlaut beside þis(s)um. Fem. gen. and dat. sing. þisse from older \*þisre, gen. pl. þissa from older \*þisra; in late OE. there also occur þissere, þissera with -re, -ra from the simple demonstrative, beside þisre, þisra with syncope of the medial vowel and simplification of the ss, see *EOE. Gr.* § 310.

The late OE. weakened inflected forms were for the most part preserved until about the middle of the twelfth century, but by the end of the century the neuter nom. acc. sing. þis had come to be used in the east Midland dialect (*Ormulum*) and doubtless also in the north Midland and northern dialects for all cases and genders of the singular, by the fourteenth century it had spread to the south Midland dialects (Chaucer, &c.), and by the fifteenth century to all the dialects.

§ 383. The early ME. inflected forms were:—

Singular: Nom. masc. *pēs* beside the new forms *pus*, *peos*; fem. *peos*, *pies*, *pyos*, *pas* (Lazamon), *pues* (§ 65). Already at this early period the nom. masc. came to be used for the feminine, as *pies* (§ 9), and the fem. for the masculine, as *peos*, *pus*. The old masc. *pēs*, and fem. *peos*, *pues* were preserved in the southern dialects until the middle of the fourteenth century. Accusative masc. *pisne*, *pesne*, *pusne* (Lazamon); fem. *pās*, *pes*. Genitive masc. and neut. *pisses*, *pesses*, *pisis*; fem. *pisse*, *pissere*. Dative masc. and neut. *pissen*, *pisne*, *pisen*, *pise*; *pisne* beside the new form *pusse*. The instrumental neut. (OE. *pȳs*, *pīs* *like this*, *thus*) seems not to have been common in ME. as it only occurs sporadically between 1375 and the end of the sixteenth century, see *N. E. D.*

Plural: Old inflected forms of the gen. and dat. are only found in the southern dialects, and even there the gen. *pissere* disappeared about the end of the twelfth century, and the dat. *pis(s)en*, *pesse(n)* is not found so late as 1340 except in the *Ayenbite*. As we have already seen (§ 381) the old nom. acc. pl. *pās*, *pōs* = OE. *pās* *these* came to be used at an early period for the plural of *pat* with the meaning *those*. Before this change in function took place the plural, irrespective of gender, had often come to be expressed by the masc. nom. sing. *pēs* and the neut. nom. acc. *pīs* before the end of the twelfth century, and in some of the south-western dialects by *pūs* or *pōs* (OE. *pēos*, § 65) in the thirteenth century, but side by side with these singular forms the new plurals *pēse*, *pise*, *pūse* or *pōse* were formed by adding -e to the singular after the analogy of the adjectival plural in -e. It should be noted that the *ē* in *pēs*, *pēse* can represent both the *ē* in OE. *pēs* and the OE. *ēo* in the fem. *pēos* (§ 65), so that the forms *pēs*, *pēse* may be partly of feminine origin. *pēs*, *pēse* seem to occur earliest in the Midland dialects, and then to have spread to the northern dialects,

and by about 1500 to all the dialects. From the fourteenth century onwards the northern dialects also had *pir* (? from ON. *peir*) as well as the variants *pire*, *peir(e)*, *pair*, *pier*, *per(c)*, *par(e)*, which has remained in the dialects of Scotland and the northern counties of England down to the present day. *pis*, *pise* (Orm, &c. *pise*) were special Midland forms, and remained in these dialects until about 1500, by which time they had been supplanted by *pēse* (Chaucer has *piſe* beside *pēse*, generally spelt *pes*). *pūs* or *pōs*, *pūse* or *pōse* occur in some of the south-western dialects from the thirteenth until well on into the fifteenth century, and were then supplanted by *pēse*.

NOTE.—The precise quality of the *ē* in ME. *pēse* is uncertain. The ordinary ME. spelling may represent *ē* or *ĕ*. In the sixteenth century it was often spelt *peis* which points to *ē*, and the pronunciation of the various forms for *these* in many of the modern dialects also presupposes a late OE. form *pæs* which according to the *N. E. D.* did exist.

§ 384. Other ME. demonstrative pronouns are :—

In OE. *ilca same* only occurred in combination with the definite article, as *sē ilca*, *þæt*, *sēo ilce the same*, and was inflected like a weak adjective. In ME. we have *pe ilke*, *pat ilke*, *pis ilke the same*; *pe ilke* was often contracted into *pilke*; *self*, which in OE. and early ME. was inflected according to the strong or weak declension of adjectives; *ʒon*, pl. *ʒone*; *ʒond* is also used as a demonstrative *that* in the *Ormulum*.

## 5. RELATIVE

§ 385. A relative pronoun proper did not exist in the oldest periods of any of the Germanic languages, and for that reason it was expressed in various ways in the separate languages. In OE. it was expressed by the relative particle

pe alone or in combination with the personal or the simple demonstrative pronoun, and for the third person also by the simple demonstrative pronoun alone, see *EOE. Gr.* § 312.

pe alone was also used in early ME., especially in the southern dialects, but it had gone out of general use by about 1250, after which date it is only found sporadically. The combination of the simple demonstrative pronoun with pe for expressing the relative pronoun died out about 1100. From the twelfth century onwards the uninflected old demonstrative neuter *pat* came to be used for the singular and plural of all genders, but for *pat* the ON. form *at* was used in the northern and some of the north Midland dialects in the oldest ME. records, and it is the usual form in the dialects of this area down to the present day. In order to indicate more clearly the gender and case of the antecedent to the relative it became common in the fourteenth century to add the personal pronoun of the third person to the *pat*, as *pat . . . he (sche) = who*; *pat . . . it = which*; *pat . . . his = whose*; *pat . . . him = whom*, &c.; and similarly with *which*, as *which . . . his = whose*, &c. These and similar constructions continued in general use until the end of the fifteenth century, and then became obsolete in the sixteenth century. *which* (plural *which(e)*), referring both to persons and things, and the oblique cases *whōs*, *whōm* of the interrogative pronoun *whō whō*, also came to be used as relatives at an early period. In later ME. the definite article *pe* was often added in front of *which* after the analogy of French usage, as *pe which = lequel*, and similarly also sometimes with *pat*. *What*, referring to things and rarely to personal pronouns or sentences, began to be used as a relative in the early part of the thirteenth century.



## 6. INTERROGATIVE

§ 386. The OE. simple interrogative pronoun had no independent form for the feminine, and was declined in the singular only, as

	<i>Masc. Fem.</i>	<i>Neut.</i>
Nom.	hwǣ	hwæt
Acc.	hwone	hwæt
Gen.	hwæs	hwæs
Dat.	hwām, hwām	hwām, hwām
Instr.		hwȳ, hwī

The old acc. form *hwone* disappeared in early ME., and its place was taken by the dative *whōm whōm*, northern *quām quhām*. The ME. gen. *whōs whōs*, northern *quās quhās* with *ō (ō)*, *ā* from the nominative and dative. The old instrumental was preserved in *whī whȳ why. which* (northern quilk), OE. *hwelc, hwilc, hwylc*; ME. pl. *whiche, wichē*.

## 7. INDEFINITE

§ 387. The more important ME. indefinite pronouns are:—*auȝt* (OE. *āwiht*) *anything, aught*, *nauȝt* (OE. *nāwiht*) *nothing, naught*, *auȝer* (OE. *āhwæper, āwper*) *one of two*, *naȝer* (OE. *nāhwæper, nāwper*) *neither of two*, *ēch*, northern *ilk* (OE. *ælc*) *each*, *eni, ani* (OE. *ænig*) *any*, *eȝer*, Orm *eȝperr* (OE. *æghwæper*) *each of two*, *neiȝer* *neither of two*, *man* (pl. *men*, unaccented form *me*) *one*, *nōn*, northern *nān* *none*, but *nō*, *nā* when the next word begins with a vowel; *quȝt* (OE. *ōwiht*) *anything, aught*, *nquȝt* (OE. *nōwiht*) *nothing, naught*, *quȝer* (OE. *ōhwæper, ōwper*) *one of two*, *nquȝer* (OE. *nōhwæper, nōwper*) *neither of two*, *sum* (pl. *sume* *some*) *some one*, *swich, siche, suche*, northern *swilk* (OE. *swylc*) *such*, beside northern *slik* (ON. *slikr*) *such*.

## CHAPTER X

## VERBS

§ 388. In treating the history of the verbs from OE. to the end of the ME. period we shall generally follow the same order as that adopted in the *EOE. Gr.* §§ 316-95.

The ME., like the OE. verb, has the following independent forms: one voice (active), two numbers, three persons, two tenses (present and preterite), two complete moods (indicative and subjunctive), besides an imperative which is only used in the present tense; one verbal noun (the present infinitive), a present participle with active meaning, and one verbal adjective (the past participle).

§ 389. ME. verbs like the OE. are divided into two great classes:—Strong and Weak. The strong verbs form their preterite and past participle by means of ablaut (*EOE. Gr.* § 103). The weak verbs form their preterite by the addition of a syllable containing a dental (OE. -de, -te) and their past participle by means of a dental suffix (OE. -d, -t). Besides these two great classes of strong and weak verbs, there are a few others, which will be treated under the general heading of *Minor Groups*.

§ 390. The chief characteristic differences between the OE. and ME. verbal forms are:—(a) the weakening of the OE. vowels a and o to e in medial and final syllables, and the gradual loss of many of the old verbal endings; (b) the numerous levellings and analogical formations which took place, especially in the preterite both of strong and weak verbs; (c) many of the OE. strong verbs became weak in ME. either in the preterite or past participle or in both.

## ME. VERBAL ENDINGS

## a. THE PRESENT.

§ 391. The normal ME. endings of the present are:—

Indic. S. and Ken.	E.M.	W.M.	N.
Sing. -e, -(e)st, -(e)þ	-e, -est, -eþ	-e, -es(t), -es	-e, -es, -es
Pl. -eþ	-en	-en(-es)	-es

Subj. Sing. -e, pl. -en in all the dialects. OE. sing. -e, pl. -en.

Imper. Sing. —, -e, pl. M. and S. -eþ, N. -es.

Pres. Part. M. -ende, S. -inde (later -inge, -ing), N. -and, § 138.

Inf. -en (OE. -an).

The east Midland dialects often have -es for -eþ in the third pers. sing. from the northern dialects, and similarly -es for -est, -eþ in the west Midland dialects. The OE. West Saxon syncopated and contracted forms of the second and third persons singular were generally preserved in the ME. southern dialects, as *bintst*, *bint*; *rist*, *rist*; *sitst*, *sit*; *stantst*, *stant*, see § 239. The ending -eþ of the third pers. singular and plural has been preserved in the form -ð among the older generation of dialect speakers in Somersetshire and Devonshire. The Midland plural ending -en of the pres. indicative was a new formation from the ending of the present subjunctive. This plural ending in -en has been preserved in many of the modern Midland dialects. In the OE. period the Northumbrian dialect had -es beside -eþ in the third pers. singular and -as in the plural. In early ME. the -es was also extended to the second pers. singular and then later to the first person, so that eventually the whole of the singular and plural ended in -es. The northern plural ending -es spread at an early period to the west Midland dialects bordering on the

northern. In the modern Scottish, northern, and most of the north Midland dialects all persons singular and plural take *-s*, *-z* (or *-əz*) when not immediately preceded or followed by their proper pronoun, that is, when the subject is a noun, an interrogative or relative pronoun, or when the verb and the subject are separated by a clause. Through the ME. weakening of the OE. endings the present of all classes of weak verbs fell together except in the southern and Kentish dialects which had the endings *-ie* in the first pers. singular, *-ieþ* in the plural and *-ien* in the inf. of the verbs which in OE. belonged to class II, and verbs of the type *werian to defend*, belonging to class I (*EOE. Gr.* §§ 370, 380). In the modern south-western dialects, especially those of Dor., Som., and Dev., the old ending *-i*, generally written *y*, has been preserved in intransitive verbs. In the plural of the imperative the west Midland dialects often have *-es* from the northern dialects. This also occurs occasionally in the east Midland dialects. From about the end of the thirteenth century the southern dialects have the ending *-inge* (*-ing*) beside *-inde* in the present participle, which was due to the influence of the old endings *-inge*, *-ing* (OE. *-ung*, *-ing*) of the verbal noun. In Chaucer the present participle regularly ends in *-ing(e)*. The OE. ending *-anne* of the inflected infinitive was only preserved with simplification of *-nn-* to *-n-* in a few monosyllabic verbs, as *tō dōne : dōn to do*, *tō sēne : sēn to see*.

#### b. THE PRETERITE.

§ 392. The normal ME. endings of the preterite are:—

Indic.	{	Strong verbs sing. —, <i>-e</i> , —,	pl. <i>-en</i>
		Weak     "     " <i>-e</i> , <i>-est</i> ( <i>-es</i> ), <i>-e</i> ,	

Subj. strong and weak verbs sing. *-e*, pl. *-en*. OE. *-e*, pl. *-en*.

Pp. : strong verbs *-en*, weak verbs *-ed* (*-d*), *-t*.

The personal endings of the preterite indicative were lost fairly early in the northern dialects, so that the singular and plural had the same form throughout, as *spak*, *māked*, &c., whereas the other dialects preserved the old difference between the singular and plural as in Chaucer. In the northern dialects the preterite indicative came to be used at an early period for the subjunctive, as northern *band* beside Midland and southern *bounde*, pl. *bounden*. This change had also taken place in the Midland dialects before Chaucer's time. The past participle was rarely inflected even in early ME. The prefix *ȝe-*, later *i-*, *y-* (§ 240) disappeared early in the northern dialects, and mostly also in the Midland dialects. It remained longest in the southern dialects. It has been preserved in the form *ə-* in many of the modern south Midland and south-western dialects.

§ 393. The final *-n* of the infinitive disappeared in the OE. period in Northumbrian, whereas in the pp. of strong verbs it remained throughout the ME. period in the northern dialects. It also disappeared fairly early in the infinitive and pp. of strong verbs in the Midland and southern dialects, and in the indicative present plural of the Midland dialects, as well as in the plural of the present subjunctive, the plural of the preterite indicative and subjunctive of all the dialects, cp. § 247.

#### A. STRONG VERBS

§ 394. In ME. as in OE. the strong verbs are divided into seven classes. Before giving examples of the various classes of strong verbs, it will be useful to state here in a connected manner some of the changes which these verbs underwent in general during the ME. period:—

1. In the present of verbs belonging to the third, fourth, and fifth classes the *ē* of the first person singular and of the

plural was levelled out into the second and third persons singular, as **helpe**, **helpest**, **helpeþ** = OE. **helpe**, **hilp(e)st**, **hilp(e)þ**; **bēre**, **bērest**, **bēreþ** = OE. **bere**, **bir(e)st**, **bir(e)þ**; **ēte**, **ētest**, **ēteþ** = OE. **ete**, **it(e)st**, **iteþ**, **it(t)**.

2. The unmutated forms of the first person singular and of the plural of the present were levelled out into the second and third persons singular, except in a few monosyllabic forms of the southern dialects, as **falle**, **fallest**, **falleþ** = OE. **fealle**, **fielst**, **fielþ**, but southern **gō**, **gēst**, **gēþ** = OE. **gā**, **gæst**, **gæþ**.

3. Verbs which had double consonants in the first person singular and in the plural of the present levelled out the double consonants (except **bb**, **gg**) into the second and third persons singular, as **falle**, **fallest**, **falleþ** = OE. **fealle**, **fielst**, **fielþ**; **sitte**, **sittest**, **sitteþ** = OE. **sitte**, **sitst**, **sit(t)**.

4. The old form of the second person singular of the preterite was generally preserved in early ME. in the Midland and southern dialects, as **bounde**, **spēke** **spēke** beside **band** (**bond**), **spak** of the first and third persons singular, but in the northern dialects the form of the first and third person singular became generalized for the singular at an early period, and similarly later in the Midland and southern dialects, which at a still later period often added **-est** from the present of the second person singular. Chaucer has the old beside the new form, as **songe** (= **sunge**), **bēre** **bēre** beside **drank**, **spak**.

5. In the northern dialects the preterite singular had begun to be levelled out into the plural already at the beginning of the fourteenth century, whereas in the Midland and southern dialects the old distinction between the stem-vowels of the singular and plural forms was generally preserved throughout the ME. period, but even in Chaucer the singular was sometimes levelled out into the plural. On the other hand the form of the plural was sometimes

levelled out into the singular in the Midland and southern dialects, as *sēt(e)* *sēt(e)*, pl. *sēten* *sēten*, beside northern *sat*, pl. *sat(e)*.

6. In the second class of strong verbs the preterite plural was generally remodelled on the past participle, as *crōpen* for older *crupen* (OE. *crupon*), pp. *crōpen* (OE. *cropen*) *crept*.

7. In OE. the preterite singular and plural of the seventh class of strong verbs had *ē* or *ēo*, but as *ēo* became *ē* in ME. all the verbs of this class, which remained strong in ME., had *ē* in the preterite, see § 65.

8. In the northern dialects the preterite indicative came to be used at an early period for the preterite subjunctive, which was generally also the case in Chaucer.

9. The final *-n* of the past participle remained throughout the ME. period in the northern dialects, whereas in the other dialects it disappeared fairly early, as northern *cumen*, *tāken*, beside *ycome*, *ytāke* in the other dialects.

10. The participial ending *-en* became *-n* after liquids, and after long vowels and diphthongs, as *stōln*, *bōrn*, *swōrn*; *leyn*, *seyn*, *slayn* (§§ 144, 147).

11. Only a few verbs preserved the operation of Verner's Law (*EOE. Gr.* §§ 115, 116), as *wēren* *wēren* : *was*, *forlōr(e)n* : *forlēsen*, *sōden* : *sēpen*.

12. All the French verbs were weak in ME. except *striven* (O.Fr. *estriver*). ON. verbs remained strong or weak according as they were strong or weak in ON.

#### FULL CONJUGATION OF A ME. STRONG VERB.

§ 395. The early ME. inflexion of *bīnden* will serve as a model for the conjugation of strong verbs generally.

*Present.*

## Indicative.

	S. and Ken.	E.M.	W.M.	N.	OE.
Sing. 1.	bīnde	bīnde	bīnde	bīnde	bīnde
2.	bintst	bīndest	bīndes(t)	bīndes	bīndest, bintst
3.	bint	bīndeþ, -es	bīndeþ, -es	bīndes	bīndeþ, bint
Plur.	bīndeþ	bīnden	bīnden, -es	bīndes	bīndaþ

## Subjunctive.

Sing. bīnde }  
Plur. bīnden } in all the dialects, OE. bīnde, pl. bīnden.

## Imperative.

Sing. bīnd in all the dialects, OE. bīnd.

Plur. N. bīndes, but bīndeþ in the other dialects, OE. bīndaþ.

## Infinitive.

N. bīnde, but bīnden in the other dialects, OE. bīndan.

## Present Participle.

N. bīdand, M. bīdende, S. and Ken. bīdinde, OE. bīdende.

*Preterite.*

## Indicative.

	S. and Ken.	M.	N.	OE.
Sing. 1.	bond	band (bond)	band	band (bond)
2.	bounde	bounde	band	bunde
3.	bōnd	band (bond)	band	band (bond)
Plur.	bounden	bounden	band(en)	bunden

## Subjunctive.

Sing.	bounde	bounde	band	bunde
Plur.	bounden	bounden	band(en)	bunden

## Participle.

3ebounde(n) 3ebounde(n) bunden (ge)bunden



## THE CLASSIFICATION OF STRONG VERBS.

## CLASS I.

§ 396.	OE.	ī	ā	i	i
	ME.	ī	ō (N. ā)	i	i
		bīten	bōt (N. bāt)	biten	biten
		drīven	drōf (N. drāf)	driven	driven

And similarly abīden (bīden), agrīsen *to be horrified*, arīsen (rīsen), bistrīden, biswīken *to deceive*, clīven *to adhere*, flīten *to quarrel*, glīden, rīden, rīnen *to touch*, rīven (ON. rīfa), schīnen, schrīven, slīden, strīven (O.Fr. estriver), prīven (ON. þrīfa), wrīten, wrīpen *to twist*.

§ 397. Some verbs belonging to this class had a weak beside a strong preterite, as grīped, slitte, smitte, beside grōp, slōt, smōt. Some verbs passed over entirely into the weak conjugation, as spiwen (§ 116), pret. and pp. spiwed; dwīnen *to disappear*, pret. and pp. dwīned.

§ 398. stīzen, stīen stīyen = OE. stīgan (§ 122, 2) *to ascend*; pret. sing. stāȝ, stēȝ (steiȝ), pl. stīzen, stīen stīyen; pp. stīzen, stīen stīyen. wrēn (OE. wrēon) *to cover*; pret. sing. wrēȝ (wreiȝ), pl. wriȝen, wriēn wrīyen; pp. wriȝen, wriēn wrīyen. þēn (OE. þēon) *to thrive*; pret. sing. þēȝ (þeiȝ), pl. þōȝen; pp. þōȝen (þowen). The pret. sing. stēȝ (steiȝ), wrēȝ (wreiȝ) were formed after the analogy of class II (§ 401), and þēn (OE. þēon, þāh, þigon, þigen) went over entirely into this class.

## CLASS II.

## § 399.

OE.	ēo	ēa	u	o
ME.	ē	ē	ō (u)	ō

schēten *to shoot* schēt schōten (schuten) schōten  
In early ME. the pret. plural regularly had u, but later

the verbs of this class generally had *ō* from the past participle; and similarly *bṛēwen* (§ 112, 1), *chēwen* to *chew*, *flēten* to *flow*, *ȝēten* to *pour*. The pret. *bad* beside *bēd* was due to the mixing up of *bidden* to *pray*, *beg*, *bid* (§ 410) with *bēden* (OE. *bēodan*) to *bid*, *command*. Some verbs of this class had a weak beside a strong preterite, as *clefte*, *crepte*, *rewed* beside *clēf*, *crēp*, *reŵ* (§ 111).

## -§ 400.

<i>sēpen</i> to <i>seethe</i>	<i>sēp</i>	<i>sōden</i> (suden)	<i>sōden</i>
<i>chēsen</i> to <i>choose</i>	<i>chēs</i>	<i>cōren</i> (curen), <i>chōsen</i>	<i>cōren cōrn</i> , <i>chōsen</i>

And similarly *frēsen* to *freeze*, *forlēsen* *lēsen* to *lose* (pp. also *lost*). For the consonant changes due to Verner's law see *EOE. Gr.* § 116.

§ 401. *drēzen*, *driēn* (*driēn drȳen*, cp. § 107, 6) to *endure*, *drēȝ* (*dreiȝ*), § 107, 5; pp. *drōȝen* (*drōwen*), cp. § 113, 2, and similarly *lēzen*, *leien* (*liēn lȳen*) to *tell lies*. *tēn* (OE. *tēon*) to *draw*, *tēȝ* (*teiȝ*), *tūzen* (*towen*, cp. § 122, 5), *tōȝen* (*tōwen*). ME. *flēn* (OE. *flēon*) to *flee* and *flēȝen* (OE. *flēogan*) to *fly* became mixed up in the present, as *flēn* (*fliēn*, *flȳen*), *flēȝ* (*fleiȝ*), *flōȝen* (*flōwen*), *flōȝen* (*flōwen*) beside weak pret. and pp. *fledde*, *yfled*; *flēȝen*, *fleien* (*fliēn*, *flȳen*), *flēȝ* (*fleiȝ*), *flōȝen* (*flōwen*), *flōȝen* (*flōwen*).

§ 402.	OE.	<i>ū</i>	<i>ēa</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>o</i>
	ME.	<i>ū</i> (ou)	<i>ē</i>	<i>ō</i> (u)	<i>ō</i>

*būzen* (*būēn bouen bowen*, § 122, 6) to *bow*, *bend*, *bēȝ* (*beiȝ*), *buȝen* (*buwen bouen bowen*), *bōȝen* (*bōwen*); *schūven* (*schouven*) to *push*, *shove*, *schēf* (*schōf*) beside weak *schuffte*, *schuven* (*schōven*), *schōven* (*schuven*) beside weak *schuft* (*schowved*); *sūken* (*souken*) to *suck*, *sēk* (*sōk*) beside weak *souked*, pp. *suken* (*soken*) beside weak *souked*; and similarly *sūpen* (*soupen*) to *sup*, *unlūken* (*unlouken*) to *unlock*.

## CLASS III.

## § 403.

OE.	i	a (o)	u	u
ME.	i	a (o)	u (o = u)	u (o = u), § 9.
	drinken	drank (dronk)	drunken	drunken
	spinnen	span (spon)	spunnen	spunnen

And similarly with other verbs containing a nasal + consonant other than d or b, as *schrinken*, *sinken*, *stinken*, *swinken to labour, toil*; *clingen*, *dingen* (ON. *dengja*) *to beat, strike*, *fingen* (ON. *flengja*), *ringen*, *singen*, *slingen* (ON. *slöngva*), *springen*, *stingen*, *swingen*, *bringen to throng, press*; *bilimpen to happen*, *swimmen*; *biginnen* (pret. also *bigoupe*), *blinnen to cease*, *rinnen* (ON. *rinna*) *to run*, *winnen*.

## § 404.

ī (i, § 73)	a (o)	ū (u, § 73)	ū (u)
bīnden	band(bond)	bōunden(bunden)	bounden(bunden)

And similarly *fīnden*, *grīnden*, *wīnden*; *climben* (§ 72), *clōmb* (§ 72), *clumben*, *clumben* (§ 72).

## § 405.

e	a	o (u)	o
hēlpēn	halp	holpēn (hulpen)	holpēn

The verbs of this type regularly had u in the preterite plural in early ME., but later they generally had o from the past participle as in Chaucer. And similarly *berken*, *delven*, *kerven to carve*, *melten*, *smerten*, *sterven*, *swellen*, *swelten to die*, *werpen to throw*, *zellen* (later also weak); *bersten* (*bresten*) *to burst*, *preschen*.

§ 406. *berzen to protect, preserve*, *barz*, *bur(e)zen*, *borzen* (*borwen*); *swelzen* (*swelewen*, *swelowen*, *swolezen*, *swolewen*, *swol(o)wen*) *to swallow*, *swal(u)z* beside weak *swel(o)wed(e)*, *swolewed(e)*, pp. *swolzen* (*swelzen*, *swol-*

wen) beside weak swelewed, -owed, see *EOE. Gr.* § 102 ; wurpen (OE. weorpan) *to become*, warþ, wurpen (OE. wurden), worpen (OE. worden), see *EOE. Gr.* § 116 ; 3ēlden (3ilden) *to recompense*, 3ōld (N. 3āld), 3ūlden (3ōlden), 3ōlden (cp. § 71) ; fīzten (fezten) *to fight*, fau3t (fa3t), fu3ten (fou3ten), fou3ten ; breiden (OE. bregden) *to brandish*, braid breid (OE. brægd) beside weak braide, brudden (OE. brūdon), bro3den (OE. brogden), broiden beside weak braided, breided, broided ; freinen (OE. fregnan, frignan) *to ask, inquire*, frain frein (OE. frægn) beside weak frained(e) freined(e).

## CLASS IV.

## § 407.

OE. e	æ	ǣ(ē) § 52	o
ME. ē	a	ē (ē)	ō
bēren <i>to bear</i>	bar	bēren (bēren)	bōren bōrn

And similarly hēlen *to conceal*, quēlen *to die*, schēren, stēlen, tēren, cumen (comen), cam (cōm), cāmen (cōmen), cumen (comen) ; nimen *to take*, nam (nōm), nāmen (nōmen), numen (nomen), see § 42, note.

## CLASS V.

## § 408.

OE. e	æ	ǣ (ē) § 52	e
ME. ē	a	ē (ē)	ē
knēden <i>to knead</i>	knad	knēden (knēden)	knēden

And similarly mēten *to measure*, biquēpen, quēpen (pret. quaþ, quop, quod with d from the old pret. plural, quēþ) ; pret. was (wes), pl. wēren wēren (wāren, wōren, § 100).

§ 409. A number of verbs originally belonging to this class went over into class IV, as brēken, brak (brēk), brēken (brāken, brōken), brōken ; and similarly drēpen *to kill*, spēken, trēden, wēven, wrēken *to avenge*.

§ 410. ēten *to eat*, ēt, ēt (OE. *æt, ēt*), ēten (ēten), ēten; and similarly frēten *to devour*. ȝēven, ȝiven beside given (Orm gifenn), N. gif *to give* (§ 176); ȝaf, ȝef, ȝafe, ȝave, ȝof, ȝove beside gaf, gaff(e); ȝēven, ȝēven, ȝāven, ȝōven beside gēven (Orm gæfenn); ȝēven, ȝōven, ȝiven (Orm ȝifenn). see §§ 176, 292. gēten, giten (ON. geta) *to get*; gat (get); gēten (getten, gat(t)e(n)); gēten (getten, gitten, got(t)en). see § 176. forȝēten, forȝiten beside forgēten *to forget*; forȝat beside forgat; forȝēten, forȝēten beside forgēten; forȝēten beside forgēten. bidden (OE. biddan) *to pray, beg, bid*; bad beside bēd (OE. bēad, see § 399); bēden, bēden; bēden. sitten *to sit*; sat; sēten, sēten; sēten. lēn lēn (§ 122, 1) *to lie down*; lai; lējen, leien; leien (lein, lain). sēn (Ken. zī, zȳ) *to see*; saȝ, sauȝ, saw (§ 110, 5), seȝ, seiȝ, sei, sai (§ 107, 4), siȝ, sī sȳ (§ 107, 6); sawen, sāȝen, sauȝen, sōwen, sōȝen, sēȝen (Orm sæȝ-henn), seiȝen, seien, sīen sȳen; sēwen, sawen, seien seyen, sein, sain, sēn.

## CLASS VI.

## § 411.

OE.	a	ō	ō	æ (a)
ME.	ā	ō	ō	ā
	fāren <i>to travel</i>	fōr	fōren	fāren

And similarly āken *to ache*, bāken, forsāken, grāven *to dig* (pret. sing. grōf), lāden *to load*, schāken, schāven, wāden, wāken, tāken (ON. taka), beside N. and n. Midl. tā, pret. also tō, pp. tān, see § 250.

## § 412.

waschen	} <i>to wash</i>	wösch	wöschen	waschen
weschen		wesch	weschen	weschen
waxen <i>to grow</i>		wox	woxen	waxen
		wex (OE. wēox)	wexen	
standen <i>to stand</i>		stōd	stōden	standen

hēven (OE. hebban, § 265)	hōf	hōven	hōven (hēved)
swēren (OE. swe- rian)	swōr	swōren	swōren, swōrn
scheppen <i>to create</i>	schōp	schōpen	schāpen
steppen (stāpen) <i>to proceed</i>	stōp	stōpen	stāpen

§ 413. dražen, drawen *to draw*; drōȝ, drōuȝ, drōw; drōȝen, drōwen; draȝen, drawen, see § 114, 2 (b); and similarly gnaȝen, gnawen *to gnaw*. slēn (OE. slēan) *to strike, slay*; slōȝ, slōuȝ, slōw; slōȝen, slōwen; slaȝen, slawen (OE. slagen), slain (OE. slāgen). laȝen (Orm laȝhenn), lauȝen, lauȝwen (Angl. hlæhhhan), leȝen, leiȝen, liȝen (WS. hliehhan) *to laugh*; lōȝ, lōuȝ, lōw; lōȝen, lōwen; laȝen, lauȝen.

## CLASS VII.

§ 414. To this class belong those verbs which originally had reduplicated preterites. In OE. they are divided into two subdivisions according as the preterite had ē or ēo. But as ēo regularly became ē in ME. (§ 65) all the verbs of this class, which remained strong, have ē. The verbs are here arranged according as in OE. the present had : ā, æ, ō, ea, āw, ōw, ē, ēa, as

hōten (OE. hātan) <i>to call</i>	hēt	hōten
lēten (lēten) <i>to let</i>	lēt	lēten (lēten)
slēpen (slēpen) <i>to sleep</i>	slēp (slepte)	slēpen (slēpen) slēped, slept
fōn (OE. fōn) } <i>to seize</i>	fēng	fangen (fongen)
fangen, fongen }		
hōn (OE. hōn) } <i>to hang</i>	hēng (hing)	hangen (hongen)
hangen, hongen }		
fallen (OE. feallan) <i>to fall</i>	fēll (fel) § 99	fallen

walken (OE. wealcan) <i>to roll</i>	wēlk (walked)	walken
fōlden (OE. fealdan) <i>to fold</i>	fēld	fōlden (§ 71)
hōlden (OE. healdan) <i>to hold</i>	hēld	hōlden
wōlden (OE. wealdan) <i>to rule</i>	wēld	wōlden
blōwen, N. blau (OE. blāwan) <i>to blow</i>	blēw	blōwen

And similarly crōwen, knōwen, sōwen, swōpen (pret. swēp) *to sweep*, þrōwen.

grōwen (OE. grōwan) <i>to grow</i>	grēw	grōwen
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And similarly blōwen *to blossom*, flōwen, rōwen, swōwen *to sound*, see § 114.

wēpen (OE. wēpan, Goth. wōpjan) <i>to weep</i>	wēp (wepte)	wōpen (wept)
bēten (OE. bēatan) <i>to beat</i>	bēt	bēten

And similarly hēwen *to hew*, lēpen *to leap*, pret. lēp beside lēpte, pp. lōpen (ON.).

#### B. WEAK VERBS

§ 415. The weak verbs, which for the most part are derivative and denominative, form by far the greater majority of all verbs. In OE. they are divided into three classes according to the endings of the infinitive, pret. indicative, and past participle. These endings are:—

Inf.	Pret.	P.P.
-an	-ede, -de, -te	-ed, -d, -t
-ian	-ode	-od
-an	-de	-d

Each of the classes I and II contained a large number of verbs, whereas class III only contained four verbs, viz.

habban to *have*, libban to *live*, secgan to *say*, and hycgan to *think*, the last of which did not survive in ME.

The OE. normal endings of the present of these three classes were :—

- I. Sing. -e, -est, -eþ, pl. -aþ, inf. -an
- II. „ -ie, -ast, -aþ, „ -iaþ, „ -ian
- III. „ -e, -ast, -aþ, „ -aþ, „ -an

WS. generally had syncopated forms in the second and third person singular of verbs belonging to class I, as *setst*, *set(t)* for older *setest*, *seteþ*, and these syncopated forms also remained in the ME. southern dialects. The OE. verbs of class I containing an *r* preceded by a short vowel had an -i- in the present first pers. singular, the present plural, the present subjunctive singular and plural, the present participle, and the infinitive, as *werie*, *weriaþ*; *werie*, *werien*; *weriende*, *werian* to *defend*. In ME. the Midland and northern dialects generalized the forms without -i-, whereas the Kentish and southern dialects retained the -i-, as M. and N. *wēre*, S. *wērie*, &c., and similarly *an(d)-sweren*, *dēren* to *injure*, *ēren* to *plough*, *fēren* to *carry*, *stiren* to *stir*.

After the -a- had been weakened to -e- (§ 134 b) the endings of class I and class III became alike; in class II the Midland and northern dialects generalized the endings without -i-, so that in these dialects the present of all three classes fell together, whereas the endings -ie, -ieþ, -ien remained in the Kentish and southern dialects. For the personal endings of the present in the various ME. dialects see § 391. The verbs of class I which had double consonants in the first person singular and the plural generally levelled out the double consonants (except *bb*, and *gg* = OE. *cg*) into the second and third person singular, as *sette*, *settest*, *setteþ* = OE. *sette*, *setst*, *set(t)*; *telle*, *tellest*, *telleþ* = OE. *telle*, *tel(e)st*, *tel(e)þ*. In the Midland and



northern dialects the verbs containing -bb-, -cg- in OE. were remodelled in ME. from the second and third persons singular, as *bien bȳen* to *buy*, *aswēven* to *stupefy*, *leien* to *lay*, beside OE. *bycgan*, *āswebban*, *lecgan*; and similarly *haven*, *liven*, *seien saien* to *say*, beside OE. *habban*, *libban*, *secgan* of the third class.

§ 416. The OE. normal endings of the preterite and past participle of the three classes were:—

I	{	Sing. -ede, -edest, -ede, pl. -edon, pp. -ed :	fremede
		„ -de, -dest, -de, „ -don, „ -ed :	dēmede <i>I performed</i>
		„ -te, -test, -te, „ -ton, „ -ed :	drencte <i>I judged</i>
II	{	„ -ode, -odest, -ode, „ -odon, „ -od :	lōcode <i>I submerged</i>
		„ -de, -dest, -de, „ -don, „ -d :	hæfde <i>I looked</i>
III			had <i>I had</i>

The OE. verbs of class I generally had -ede in the preterite when the stem-syllable was originally short, but -de when the stem-syllable was originally long, and -te after voiceless consonants. Those verbs which had -te in OE. had it also in ME. In ME. we also often have -te after l, m, n, and in stems ending in -ld, -nd, -rd with shortening of a preceding long vowel, see § 270. Already in OE. the preterite of class III was the same as the preterite in -de of class I. And after the -o- had been weakened to -e- in class II the preterite of this class became the same as the preterite in -ede of class I. So that in early ME. the preterite sing. of all weak verbs ended either in -ede or -de (-te), and the plural in -eden or -den (-ten). The endings of the preterite indicative and the preterite subjunctive regularly fell together in ME. except that the indicative had -est in the second person singular.

§ 417. In ME. the final *-e* disappeared at an early period in those verbs which preserved the medial *-e-* of *-ede*, as *loved* (a new formation for *lovēde*), *māked*, *panked*, beside *hērde*, *bledde*, *kiste*. The final *-e* of the singular and the final *-en* (§ 147) of the plural of all weak verbs disappeared at an early period in the northern dialects, and likewise the *-est* of the second pers. singular often disappeared, so that in these dialects all forms of the singular and plural came to be alike. The final *-e* also ceased to be pronounced at an early period in the Midland and southern dialects, although it continued to be written long after it had ceased to be pronounced, but the ending *-est* (§ 150) of the second person singular generally remained. For the loss or retention of medial and final *e* in trisyllabic and polysyllabic forms see §§ 154-5.

## CLASS I.

§ 418. Before beginning to treat the history of the preterite and past participle of the OE. first class of weak verbs in ME. it will be advisable to state here certain vowel and consonant changes which took place partly in OE. and partly in ME. :—

1. Long vowels were shortened before certain consonant combinations (§ 87), as *blēden* to *bleed*, *bledde*, *ybled*; *clēpen* to *clothe*, *cledde*, *cladde*, *yclad*, *yclad*; *fēlen* to *fecl*, *felte*, *yfelt*; *hēren* to *hear*, *hērde*, *yhērd*; *kēpen* to *kecp*, *kepte*, *ykept*; *kīpen* to *make known*, *kidde*, *ykid*; *lēden* to *lead*, *ledde*, *ladde*, *yled*, *ylad*; *mēten* to *meet*, *mette*, *ymet*.

2. *d* became *t* after voiceless consonants in OE., and when two dentals thus came together they became *tt* which were simplified to *t* when final (§ 239), as *drencte*:*drencan* to *submerge*, *cyste*:*cyssan* to *kiss*, *grētte*:*grētan* to *greet*, and similarly in ME.

3. Double consonants were simplified in OE. before and

after other consonants, as *cyste: cyssan, fylde: fyllan, gewielde: gewieldan* to *overpower*, *gyrde: gyrdan* to *gird*, *sende: sendan, reste: restan* (*EOE. Gr.* § 145), and similarly in ME.

4. After liquids and nasals, and in stems ending in *-ld, -nd, -rd* we often or generally have *t* in the preterite and past participle, whereas OE. had *d*, see § 270; as *bilte* (OE. *bylde*), *bilt built*; *dwelte, dwelt*; *felte, felt*; *girte, girt*; *dremte, dremt*; *blente, blent blended, sente, sent*.

5. On preterites and past participles like *dreinte, ydreint: drenchen*; *meinde, ymeind: mengen*, and similarly *blenchen* to *flinch*, *quenchen, sprengen*, &c., see § 263.

§ 419. The OE. verbs with an original short stem-syllable had *-ede* in the preterite and *-ed* in the past participle, as *werien* to *defend*, *werede, gewered*; *fremman* to *perform*, *fremede, gefremed*, and similarly *derian* to *injure*, *erian* to *plough*, *ferian* to *carry*, *styrian* to *stir*, *dynnan* to *resound*, &c., see *EOE. Gr.* §§ 367-8. If through analogical formation the stem-syllable became long in ME. the preterite and past participle regularly had *-ed*, but if the stem-syllable remained short the preterite regularly had *-de* and the past participle *-ed*, as *wēren, wēred, ywēred*; *frēmen, frēmed, yfrēmed*, but *stiren, stirde, ystired*; *dinen, dinde, ydined*, but there were numerous analogical formations in both directions, see § 153. On the preterite and past participle of verbs like *an(d)sweren, gaderen*, see § 155.

§ 420. Verbs with an original long stem-syllable which in OE. had *-de* in the preterite and *-ed* in the past participle generally had these in ME. also, as *dēlen, dēlde, ydēled, dēmen* to *judge*, *dēmde* beside the new formation *dēmed(e), ydēmed*, see *EOE. Gr.* § 373. The *-e-* in the past participle was very often syncopated, which in OE. only took place in the inflected forms, as *ydēld, yhērd: hēren* to *hear*, and similarly *deien dien* to *die*, *hēlen, lēren* to *teach*, *stēren* to *steer*, see § 151.

§ 421. When the stem-syllable ended in -d preceded by a long vowel the long vowel was shortened in the preterite and past participle (§ 91, 2), and when the -e- in the past participle had disappeared the dd was simplified to d, as blēden, bledde, ybled; lēden, ledde, ladde, yled, ylad; and similarly chiden, fēden, hīden, spēden, &c.

§ 422. When the stem ended in v, l, m, n, or nd, ld, rd the preterite and past participle generally had t in ME., as lēven *to leave*, lefte yleft beside ylēved; and similarly clēven *to cleave*. fēlen, felte, yfelt; lēnen *to lend*, lente, ylent; senden, sente, ysent; and similarly benden, blenden, wenden. bilden, bilte, ybilt; girden, girte, ygirt, see § 270.

§ 423. þ + d became dd which was simplified to d in the past participle, as clēþen *to clothe*, cledde, cladde, yclad, yclad; kīþen *to make known*, kidde, ykid.

§ 424. Verbs which had the preterite in -te in OE. also had it in ME., as kissen, kiste, ykissed beside ykist; kēpen, kepte, ykēped beside ykept; and similarly with the following verbs which were strong in OE., but became weak in ME.: crēpen *to creep*, lēpen *to leap*, slēpen, slēpen *to sleep*, wēpen *to weep*.

§ 425. When the stem ended in t the tt was simplified to t in the past participle, as mēten, mette, ymet, and similarly grēten, swēten *to sweat*. When the stem ended in st, nt the tt was simplified to t in the preterite and past participle, as resten, reste, yrest; and similarly casten, lasten, stinten, pirsten, &c.

§ 426. OE. had a certain number of verbs belonging to class I which had umlaut in the present but not in the preterite and past participle, see *EOE. Gr.* § 379. Many of these verbs preserved this characteristic in ME., as bȳen (biggen, beggen, buggen = OE. bycgan, § 49) *to buy*, bȳute, ybȳut. tellen, tōlde (telde), ytōld (yteld); and similarly sellen. ME. new formations were: dwelde,

dwelte, ydwellen, ydwelt; and similarly *quellen* to *kill*. *rēchen* to *reach*, *rauhte*, *yraucht*; and similarly *lacchen* to *catch*, *seize*, *strecchen*, and the AN. loanword *cacchen*. *tēchen*, *tauhte*, *ytaucht*. *sēken* (*sēchen*), *souhte*, *ysouht*; and similarly *bisēken* (*bisēchen*). *bringen*, *brouhte*, *ybrouht*. *penken*, *pinken* (*penchen*), *houhte*, *yhouht*. *me pinkeþ* *it seems to me*, *me houhte*, *houhte*. *wirken* (*wirchen*), *wrouhte*, *ywrouht*.

§ 427. The conjugation of the preterite of *wēren* to *defend*, *hēren* to *hear*, *tellen* to *count*, and *kissen* to *kiss* will serve as models of all verbs of class I:—

*Indicative.*

Sing. 1.	wēred(e)	hēde	tōlde	kiste
2.	wēredest	hēdest	tōldest	kistest
3.	wēred(e)	hēde	tōlde	kiste
Plur.	wēred(en)	hēden	tōlden	kisten

*Subjunctive.*

Sing.	wēred(e)	hēde	tōlde	kiste
Plur.	wēred(en)	hēden	tōlden	kisten

CLASS II.

§ 428. It has been shown in § 415 that the ME. inflexion of the verbs belonging to this class regularly fell together with that of verbs of the type *wēren* (OE. *werian*) of class I, as present singular *panke*, *pankest*, *pankeþ*, plural *panken*, *-es*; preterite singular *panked(e)*, *pankedest*, *panked(e)*, plural *panked(en)*; and similarly *asken* (*axen*), *clensen*, *clōpen*, *enden*, *folwen*, *grōpen*, *halwen* to *hallow*, *hāten*, *hōpen*, *lernen*, *līken* to *please*, *lōken*, *offren*, *schēwen* to *show*, *sorwen* to *sorrow*, *grieve*, *spāren*, *spellen* to *relate*, *þōlen* to *bear*, *suffer*, *wundren*, &c., but *loven*, pret.

loveðe beside loved(e), see § 153. Only a small number of verbs had syncopated beside unsyncopated forms in the preterite and past participle, as birēven (OE. berēafian), birefte, bireft, beside birēved(e), birēved; clēpen (OE. cliopian, cleopian) *to call*, clepte, yclept beside clēped(e), yclēped; māken, māde, ymād, ymaad, (§ 250) beside mākede, ymāked; pleien (OE. plegian) *to play*, pleide, ypleid, beside pleied(e), ypleied.

## CLASS III.

§ 429. ME. only preserved three of the four OE. verbs belonging to this class (§ 415), viz. *haben* (OE. *habban*), *liven* (OE. *libban*), *sei(e)n* *sai(e)n* (OE. *secgan* = ME. *S. seggen*, Ken. *ziggen*) *to say*. The presents of these verbs were new formations from the second and third persons singular which in OE. had a single consonant, as *hafast*, *hafaþ*. In ME. the preterite and past participle *lived(e)* (OE. *lifde*), *ylived* (OE. *gelifd*) beside the preterite *liveðe* were new formations after the analogy of the second class of verbs, see § 153. The preterite *saide* beside the southern form *sēde* corresponded to OE. *sægde* beside *sāde*. The verb *haben* (*habben*) has a large number both of contracted and uncontracted forms, for which see *N. E. D.* s.v. The following are the more common forms of the present and preterite indicative, the infinitive and the past participle:—

	<i>Present.</i>	<i>Preterite.</i>
Sing. 1.	habbe, have, ha	hafde, haveðe, had(d)e
2.	havest, hast	had(d)est, had(e)st
3.	haveþ, haþ	hafde, haveðe, had(d)e
Plur.	habbeþ, -en, -es, haveþ, have(n), han	had(d)e(n)
Inf.	habbe(n), have(n)	pp. yhaved, yhadde, (y)had

## AN. OR O.FR. VERBS IN ME.

§ 430. All the AN. verbs were weak in ME. except *strīven* (O.Fr. *estriver*) which became strong. The ME. verbs were generally based on the AN. strong or accented stem-form of the present, as *accūsen*, *awaiten*, *blāmen*, *carien*, *claimen*, *escāpen*, *marien*, *stūdien*, &c.

§ 431. The verbs in *-ir* generally had the extended stem-form *-isch-* (§ 278), as *banischen*, *finischen*, *punischen*, *vanischen*, &c., but *obeyen*, *sēsen* *to seize*, and *rejōisen* did not have the extended stem-form. Some ME. verbs were based on the weak or end accented form of the present, as *deceiven*, *preien*, *preisen* *to praise*, *serven*, *deneien* beside *denȳen*, *coveren* beside *keveren*, *mōven* beside *mēven*, *prōven* beside *prēven*, see § 198.

§ 432. The preterite was formed in *-ed*, pl. *ed(en)*, and the past participle in *-ed* (see §§ 153, 155), except when the stem ended in a long vowel or diphthong, as *blāmen*, *blāmed*; *defenden*, *defended*; *assenten*, *assented*; *finischen*, *finished*; *marien*, *married*; *prēchen* *to preach*, *prēched*, &c. When the stem ended in a long vowel the preterite, but not the past participle, had a syncopated beside an unsyncopated form, as *crȳen*, *crȳde* beside *crȳed*, pp. *crȳed*; and similarly *defȳen*, *espȳen*, &c. When the stem ended in a diphthong both the preterite and past participle had syncopated and unsyncopated forms side by side, as *preien* *to pray*, *preide*, *preid* beside *preied*, *preied*; and similarly *anoien*, *bitraien*, *paien*, &c.

## C. MINOR GROUPS

## 1. PRETERITE-PRESENTS.

§ 433. These verbs were originally unreduplicated strong perfects which acquired a present meaning like Gr. *oīda* = OE. *wāt* *I know*. In prim. Germanic a new weak preterite,

an infinitive, a present participle, and in some verbs a strong past participle, were formed. They are inflected in the present like the preterite of strong verbs, except that the second person singular has the same stem-vowel as the first and third persons, and has preserved the old ending *-t* (*EOE. Gr.* § 324). The following verbs of this type were preserved in ME. and are here arranged according to the class of strong verbs with which they are related:—

§ 434. Class I: N. *wāt* *I know*, *wās(t)*, *wāt*, M. and S. *wōt*, *wōst*, *wōt*, pl. *witen* (*wāt*, *wōt*); inf. *wite(n)* *wute(n)*; pres. part. *witand(e)*, *witend(e)*, *witind(e)*, *witing(e)*; pret. *wiste* (*wuste*); pp. *wist*.

§ 435. Class III: an, on *I grant*, also the new formations *unne*, *unnest*, *unne*, pl. *unnen*; pret. *ūþe* (*ouþe*); pp. *unned*.

N. *can*, *canst*, *can*, pl. *can*, M. and S. *can* (*con*), *canst* (*const*, *cunne*), *can* (*con*), pl. *cunnen* (*connen*); subj. *cunne* (*conne*); participial adj. N. *cunnand* *cunning*; pret. *couþe*, *coude* (§ 274); pp. *coup*.

*dar* *I dare*, *darst*, *dar*, pl. *durren* (*dorren*); inf. *durren*; pret. *durste* (*dorste*); pp. *durst*.

*þarf* (*þar*, § 248) *I need*, *þarft* (*þurfe*), *þarf* (*þar*), pl. *þurven*; inf. *þurven*; pret. *þurfte* (*þorfte*).

§ 436. Class IV: M. and N. sing. and pl. *mun*, *mon* *shall*, *will*, pret. *munde*, *monde*; ON. inf. *muna* *to remember*.

N. sing. and pl. *sal* (§ 289 note) *shall*, M. and S. *schal* (Ken. *ssel*), *schalt*, *schal*, pl. *schulen*, *scholen*; subj. *schule*; pret. N. *suld*, M. and S. *schulde*, *schölde* beside *schōlde* (§ 71).

§ 437. Class V: N. sing. and pl. *mai* *can*, M. and S. *mai*, *miȝt* (Orm *mahht*), *mai*, pl. *muȝen*, *mowen*, *mawen*; subj. *maze* (*mawe*), *muȝe* (*mowe*); pres. part. *mazende* (Ken. *mezende*), *mowende*, *mouwynge*, *mowing*; inf. *muȝen* (Orm *muȝhenn*), *mowen*, *mow*; pret. N. *might*, *moght*, M. and S. *miȝte*, *mouȝte*.



§ 438. Class VI: *mōt may, must, mōst, mōt, pl. mōten, pret. moste, muste.*

§ 439. Class VII: N. sing. and pl. *āȝ āgh possess, own*, early M. *āȝ, auȝ, awe*, M. and S. *ōȝ (ouȝ), owe (owest), ōȝ (ouȝ)*, pl. *ōȝen (owen)*; inf. N. *āȝe(n)*, early M. *āȝen (Orm āȝhenn)*, M. and S. *ōȝen (owen)*; pret. N. *āȝt(e) āght(e)*, early M. *āȝte, auȝte*, M. and S. *ouȝte*; pp. *āȝen, owen.*

## 2. ANOMALOUS VERBS.

### § 440. a. THE SUBSTANTIVE VERB.

#### *Present.*

	N.	M. and S.
Sing. 1.	<i>am (es)</i>	<i>am (em)</i>
2.	<i>art (ert, es)</i>	<i>art (ert)</i>
3.	<i>es</i>	<i>is</i>
Plur.	<i>ar(e), er, es</i>	<i>are(n), arn</i>
Sing. 1.	<i>(bē)</i>	<i>bē</i>
2.	<i>bēs</i>	<i>bist (bēst)</i>
3.	<i>bēs</i>	<i>biȝ (bēȝ)</i>
Plur.	<i>bēs</i>	<i>bēn, bēȝ</i>
Subj.	<i>bē, pl. bēs</i>	<i>bē, pl. bēn, bēȝ</i>

#### *Preterite.*

	M.	S.
Sing. 1.	<i>was (wes)</i>	<i>was (wes)</i>
§ 43 note		
2.	<i>wēre (wōre), § 166</i>	<i>wēre</i>
3.	<i>was (wes)</i>	<i>was (wes)</i>
Plur.	<i>war(e), wes</i>	<i>wēren (wōren), § 166</i>
P.P.	<i>bēn</i>	<i>bēn, ybē</i>

§ 441.           *b. THE VERB dōn.**Present.*

	N.	M.	S.
Sing. 1.	dō	dō	dō
2.	dōs	dōst	dēst (dōst)
3.	dōs	dōþ	dēþ (dōþ)
Plur.	dōs	dōn	dōþ
Imper.	dō, pl. dōs	dō, pl. dōþ	dō, pl. dōþ

Preterite *dide, dede, düde* (OE. *dyde*, see § 49) inflected like a weak preterite. P.P. *dōn*, S. *ydō*.

§ 442.           *c. THE VERB gān (gōn).**Present.*

	N.	M.	S.
Sing. 1.	gā	gō	gō
2.	gās	gōst	gēst (gōst)
3.	gās	gōþ	gēþ (gōþ)
Plur.	gās	gōn	gōþ
Imper.	gā, pl. gās	gō, pl. gōþ	gō, pl. gōþ

Preterite *ȝēde* (*ȝōde*, § 65 note), and *wente*. P.P. *gān*, *gōn*.

§ 443.           *d. THE VERB willen.*

Present sing. 1. 3. *wille* (*wile, wil, wole, wule, wolle, wulle*), 2. *wilt* (*wolt, wult*), pl. *willen, wiln, -ep* (*wollen, wullen, -ep*); preterite *wōlde* beside *wōlde* (§ 71), *walde, welde*; P.P. *wōld*.

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